

TMR

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THE MUSLIM READER

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GUARDIANS OF THE DUNYA

Can we be the Khalifah this Earth needs?

Climate Change

We need to act now!

Green Islam

Can it save Indonesia from climate collapse?

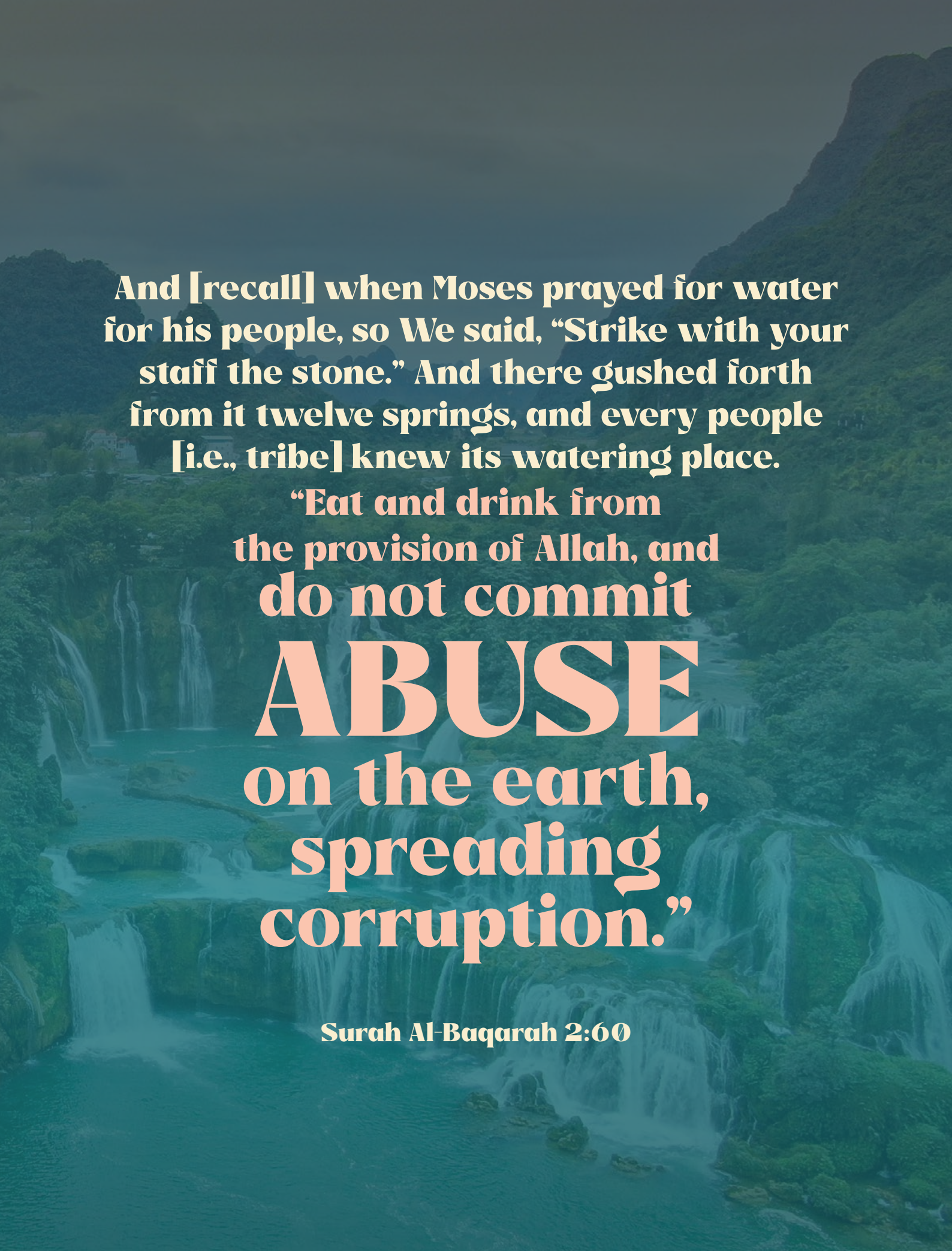
**10 Du'as and Prayers
to Read for Travelling**

**Saving Truth and Beauty:
The Destruction of Nature and
the Islamic Solution**

A Primer on Umrah

❁ وَإِذِ اسْتَسْقَى مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ
فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ^ص
فَانفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا^ص
قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَّشْرَبَهُمْ^ص
كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا مِنْ رِزْقِ اللَّهِ
وَلَا تَعْتُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ❁

سورة البقرة، آية ٦٠



And [recall] when Moses prayed for water for his people, so We said, “Strike with your staff the stone.” And there gushed forth from it twelve springs, and every people [i.e., tribe] knew its watering place.

**“Eat and drink from
the provision of Allah, and
do not commit
ABUSE
on the earth,
spreading
corruption.”**

Surah Al-Baqarah 2:60

THE MUSLIM READER

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TMR contains some of Allah's names and Quranic verses. Please do not dispose in the trash. Kindly keep, shred, or recycle the magazine. Thank you for your kind consideration and gesture.

IN LOVING MEMORY

... of those who contributed to MCAS

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

"Indeed to Allah we belong and to Him we shall return."

Qur'an 2:156

يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَ يُؤْمِرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرِ وَأُولَئِكَ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

They believe in Allah and in the Last Day and enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, and hasten to excel each other in doing good. These are among the righteous.

Qur'an 3:114



1957 - 2022

Allahyarham

**Abdul Azees bin
Abdul Karim**

Allahyarham Bro Abdul Azees bin Abdul Karim, fondly known as Bro Razees, had been a long-time volunteer of the Association. Bro Razees was a former Council and Exco member of the Association who had rendered his service especially in the Converts' Development Division, Education and Da'wah divisions with great dedication and commitment. In 2022, Bro Razees was awarded the "Lifetime Achievement Award" by the former President, Imran Kuna during the Eidul Fitri 2022 Celebrations.



1949 - 2022

Allahyarham

Muhammad Amin Teo

Bro Muhammad Amin Teo was a former MCAS staff and long-time volunteer. He had rendered much of his time and efforts generously, in ensuring the converts' welfare and wellbeing are well taken care of. Bro Amin was fondly known as "Abang Long" (oldest big brother) by many of the converts at MCAS, a much beloved brotherly figure to many who know him. Bro Amin had also been one of our Registrars at Darul Arqam, facilitating the conversions of our new Muslim brothers and sisters.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Astaghfirullah: I seek forgiveness from God

Alhamdulillah: Praise be to God Allahu Akbar: God is the Greatest

Amanah: Moral responsibility of fulfilling one's obligations in a proper manner

AS: 'Allayhis Salam (Arabic) Meaning: Peace be upon him. Other similar abbreviations: PBUH (peace be upon him), PBOH (peace be on him) Usage: For the Prophets (AS) who came before Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

Bismillah: In the name of Allah

Dars: A religious lecture or activity in the pursuit of Islamic knowledge

Deen: Religion; way of life

Da'wah: Invitation to understand Islam

Halal: Permissible / Lawful

Haram: Forbidden / Unlawful

Hijab: Headgear that covers hair and neck, worn by females

Hijra: Migration

Ijtihad: Independent reasoning
Insha'Allah: If God wills

MCAS: Muslim Converts' Association of Singapore
Similar abbreviations: DA (Darul Arqam)

MashaAllah: What God has willed

Masjid: Mosque

Muhajirin: Emigrants

RA: Radiyallahu 'Anhu/'Anha/'Anhum (Arabic) Meaning: May Allah be pleased with him/her/ them
Usage: For the Companions (RA) of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) SAW

Sallallahu 'Alaihi Wassallam (Arabic)
Meaning: Peace be upon him
Similar abbreviations: PBUH, PBOH (peace be on him)
Usage: For Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

Salam (greeting):
Assalamu'alaikum (Peace be upon you)

Sharia/Shar'i/Shariah: Islamic laws

Solah/Solaat: Prayer/Prayers (plural of Solah)

Subhaanallah: Glory be to God
Sunnah: Practices of Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

SWT: Subhanahu Wa Ta 'ala
Meaning: Glorified and Exalted One
Usage: For Allah (SWT)

Tafsir: Exegesis of the Quran

Zakat: That which purifies; almsgiving, an obligatory payment made annually on specific property or wealth for a determined amount in accordance with the methods and rulings of Islam.

Note: Arabic terms have been represented by basic Roman alphabets, and their meanings briefly provided, to ease your reading. For accurate pronunciation and detailed meanings, it is highly advised to refer to the original spelling and meanings in Arabic.

*"Propagate my teaching even
if it is only one sentence"*

- Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)



MCAS
Darul Arqam

Muslim Converts' Association of Singapore actively serves to bridge everyone - regardless of language, race or belief - towards the better understanding of Islam. Advocating no compulsion towards religion, this non-profit organisation is dedicated to deliver educational opportunities with lectures, courses, and other activities that depict Islam in discussion, behaviour and spirit.

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9am - 6pm (Monday & Saturday)

9am - 9pm (Tuesday - Friday)

9am - 1pm (Sunday)

Class and Talks will be conducted
as per their schedules.

Closed on Public Holidays

EDITOR'S NOTE

Assalamualaikum wr wb, dear beloved Readers

All praise be to Allah. A warm welcome to yet another edition of The Muslim Reader.

2022 has brought us a long way from pandemic times, from adapting to the then restrictive "new norms" to more recently, with the relaxation of mask-wearing rules and social distancing guidelines. This is also consistent with other parts of the world that have already opened up their borders and eased their safety management measures way before Singapore did. Many of us have also resumed social gatherings with our family and friends, be it for celebrations or for worship, amongst other things. Let us remember to seek Allah's protection and ask Him to ease our affairs in remaining steadfast in being socially responsible.

In light of borders being reopened across the globe, some of us might already have travel plans. As we resume exploring Allah's beautiful world, let us not forget to seek His protection and ease in our travel affairs. In this edition of TMR, you will find a good list of 10 supplications and prayers for travelling. You will also find a Brief Primer on Umrah, especially beneficial for those who have planned journeys to the Haramain.

Part of being socially responsible also entails striving to be a community that is conscious of the very environment that we live in. It is in our best interests to lead lives beyond ourselves by caring for the larger community; this allows for a vibrant, thriving society that aims to leave behind a good home for future generations. This edition of TMR brings think pieces on the environment, reminding us of our responsibilities as Guardians of the Dunya, the khalifahs of the earth. It is also mentioned in the Quran, that we are placed on earth as khalifahs, "I am going to place a successive 'human' authority on earth" (Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 30). Therefore, let us pray for Allah's guidance and ease in the fulfilment of that purpose.

May this edition of TMR broaden your horizons, in navigating Allah's wide and beautiful lands, with hearts constantly filled with the yearning for His mercy and guidance.

Waalaikumsalaam wr wb, till we meet again insha'Allah.

Managing Editor

Nur Syafiqah Hamzah

TMR

THE MUSLIM READER

THE MUSLIM READER

Every day, we see the effects of climate change in the news – from droughts and floods to heatwaves and hurricanes. Climate change is a global problem, and it requires a global solution.

We must all work together, governments, international and local businesses, and individuals in order to make the changes necessary to protect our planet. Time is running out, and we need to act now.

Role of Governments

Governments worldwide have a crucial role in preventing and mitigating climate change. They must enact policies to reduce emissions, support clean energy, and protect people and nature from the impacts of climate change.

But while governments and businesses are taking steps to reduce emissions and slow the pace of climate change, individuals also have a role to play.

Individual Responsibilities

We all need to take responsibility for our behaviour and make changes in our everyday lives to help mitigate the effects of climate change.

There are lots of ways we can help protect our planet from climate change: recycle more; drive less; eat more plants; reduce food waste; walk more;

plant trees; buy less stuff; turn off lights when not in use (and switch them on again when you go back); share with others what you've learned about how your actions affect our environment; join a grassroots movement for change where you live or work (it doesn't matter if you're an environmentalist or not).

And when we all do our part, we can impact the fight against climate change. We need to fundamentally rethink the way we live our lives if we're going to make a dent in this problem. That means re-evaluating everything from the food we eat to the way we power our homes.

Behaviour Change Models

Behaviour change models are often proposed to shape public behaviour related to climate change, but they have limitations. One of the biggest challenges is to make these models sustainable. Even if a behaviour change model successfully induces someone to adopt a new behaviour,

there is no guarantee that they will maintain that behaviour over the long term.

There are also challenges in designing behaviour change models that are effective and scalable.

Climate change is a global

problem, and any behaviour change model that will make a significant impact will need to reach a large number of people.

Overall, we must take a comprehensive approach that includes other measures such as education, regulation, and technological innovation.

CLIMATE CHANGE

We need to act NOW

BY MUHAMMAD ADNAN

Role of Media in Shaping Public Opinions on Climate Change

No matter what our individual behaviours may be, it is important to remember that they all add up. This is where the media comes in.

By raising awareness about environmental issues and promoting positive behaviour change, the media can play a vital role in shaping public opinion on climate change. Through news stories,

documentaries, and public service announcements, the media can raise awareness about the causes and effects of climate change.

Additionally, the media can provide information about how individuals can reduce their carbon footprint through lifestyle changes such as conserving energy, recycling and driving less.

By increasing public awareness and understanding of climate change, the media can play a crucial role in fostering behavioural change.

This article was originally published on Australian Muslim Times (AMUST) by Muhammad Adnan.

It is reprinted with the kind permission of AMUST.

Annual General Meeting

MCAS held its 42nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 29 May 2022. The members elected the Management Council for the 2022-2024 term. Bro Adam Foo became the newly-elected MCAS President.



Members at the auditorium, attending the AGM.



Senior volunteers of MCAS (from right to left): Brothers Ridzuan Wu, Shahbaz Ahmad, Ibrahim Yeo, Kamar Lim and Ariff Sultan



Newly-elected Council Members who were present for the phototaking session.



Brother Mustafa Ismail as Chairman of the AGM.

Council Orientation & Training

The Council Members had the Orientation and Induction Training on 13 August 2022. The training was conducted by Dr Ameen Talib. The Orientation was conducted by Bro Ariff Sultan.



Brother Ariff Sultan conducting the Orientation for Council Members



Dr Ameen Talib, facilitator of the training.



Council Members

THE MUSLIM READER

Can a
**'green
Islam'**
save
Indonesia
from
climate
collapse

BY ENNO HINZ

© DEUTSCHEWELLE, 06.03.2022

Calls for an environmentally conscious form of Islam are growing in Indonesia, as climate change poses enormous ecological challenges for the country. Experts say it could change society's approach to climate efforts.

Following the publication of an alarming report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Indonesia is once again at the center of the global climate debate.

As the world's largest exporter of coal and palm oil, the country has a major impact on the global climate crisis. Yet the island state itself is increasingly affected by extreme weather events. In 2019, a severe drought led to widespread forest fires. In 2020, the country experienced massive flooding due to the heaviest rainfall in decades.

With a population of over 270 million, Indonesia faces enormous social and environmental challenges, and

some experts see religion as a ray of hope. As the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, calls for an environmentally conscious Islam are growing in Indonesia.

"There is no doubt that the new Islamic environmental awareness is strengthening the entire ecological movement in Indonesia," Fachruddin Mangunjaya, chairman of the Center for Islamic Studies at the National University in Jakarta, told DW.

A country in an environmental dilemma

Indonesia, with its more than 17,000 islands, is in a quandary. In addition to waste disposal, the two major climate sins of the country — coal-fired power and deforestation — repeatedly make the country's headlines.

Indonesia is not only the world's export champion for thermal coal, but also the largest producer of palm

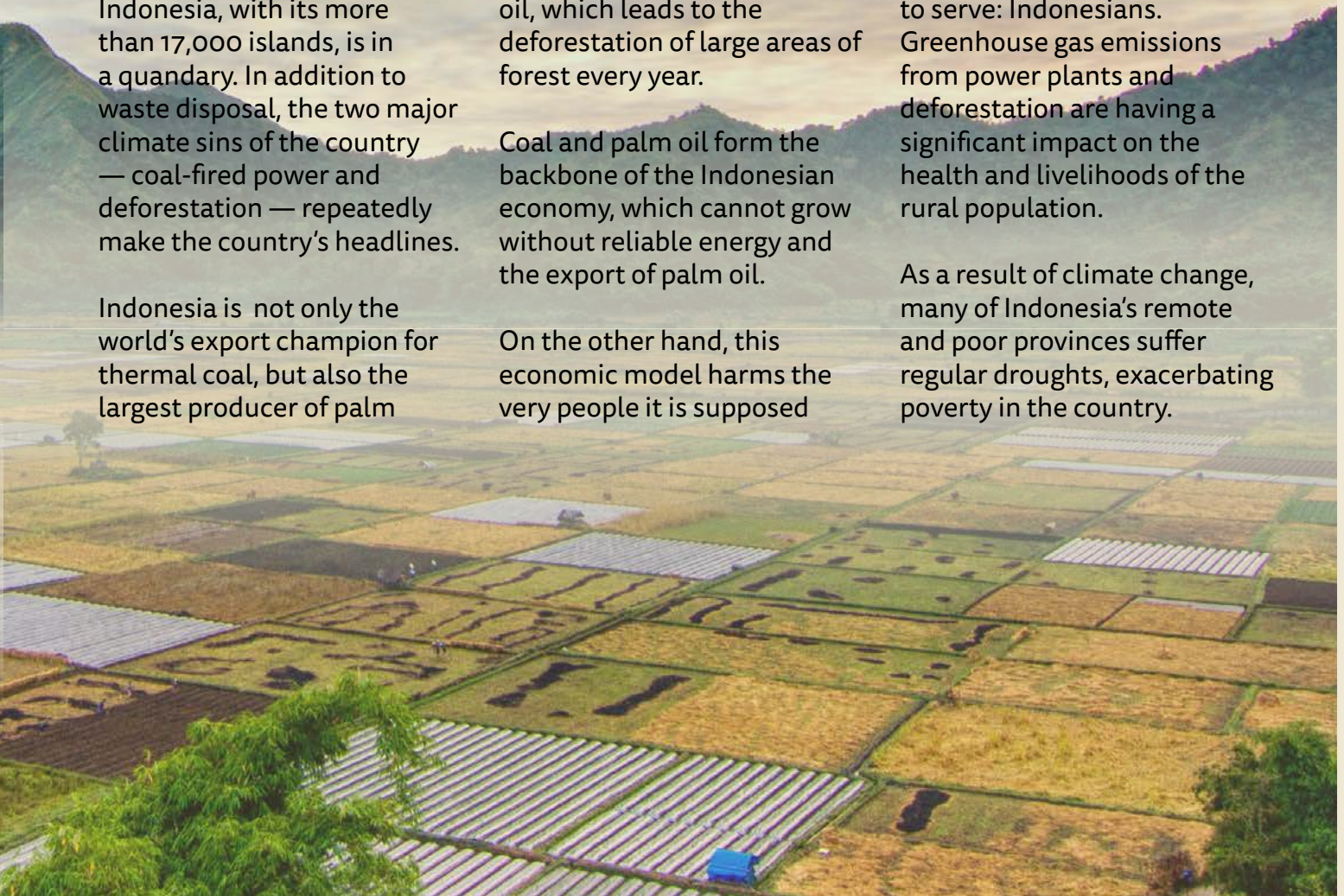
oil, which leads to the deforestation of large areas of forest every year.

Coal and palm oil form the backbone of the Indonesian economy, which cannot grow without reliable energy and the export of palm oil.

On the other hand, this economic model harms the very people it is supposed

to serve: Indonesians. Greenhouse gas emissions from power plants and deforestation are having a significant impact on the health and livelihoods of the rural population.

As a result of climate change, many of Indonesia's remote and poor provinces suffer regular droughts, exacerbating poverty in the country.



Green Islam creates hope

Islam, to which almost 87% of the population in Indonesia feels affiliated, could provide a way out of the dilemma.

"The protection of nature and the environment is one of the commandments of Islam. Therefore, the use of clean energy is also ethically and morally important for Muslims," Indonesian anthropologist Ibnu Fikri told DW.

Together with his colleague Freek Colombijn from the Free University in Amsterdam, he has been researching the topic of "Green Islam" in Indonesia – an interaction between humans and the environment inspired by Islamic ideas and teachings.

Green Islam is also receiving more attention in politics. President Joko Widodo's government recently engaged with Islamic leaders and

communities to set a goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2060.

Holding onto that principle, last year, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry signed a partnership agreement with Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the country's largest Muslim organization, to improve environmental management and sustainable forestry.

'Translate awareness into concrete action'

According to Fachruddin, however, that is not enough. The urgency for increased climate awareness has not yet reached the majority of the country's rural population and clerics.

A 2020 survey by the Katadata Insight Center shows that Indonesian citizens place the highest trust in information

from religious clerics. As a result, Fachruddin's institute in Jakarta is working specifically on building bridges between leaders in Muslim society and environmental scientists.

"It is important that Islamic clerics not only understand the religious teachings, but also their significance for

climate protections, so they can translate their awareness into concrete action," Fachruddin said.

So far, he has trained about 1,000 Islamic clerics who practice environmental protection and provide education in various villages across the country — and the number is growing.

Boarding schools as the nucleus of climate activism

Young people in particular need to be reached and made aware of environmental protection.

"We need to think more about our future so that our students can find answers to pressing environmental issues early on and get involved in their own communities," Khatibul

Umam, who runs an Islamic boarding school (Pesantren) on the island of Madura, told DW.

Islamic boarding schools are an important part of Indonesia's education system. Umam's boarding school alone has 11,000 students.

The school has made the combination of Islam and environmental protection one of its core tasks by supporting several environmental protection projects such as reforestation, sustainable agriculture and recycling, all of which have regional roots and are inspired by Islam.

The limits of 'green islam'

Although the direction is clear, Umam also knows that Islamic environmental activism in Indonesia is still at the beginning. "The main challenge we face, not only in our schools but in society in general, is to try to make people understand why these projects are significant, not only to us, but to all levels of society and the future generations," said Umam.

Finally, as anthropologist Ibnu Fikri admits, there is no one Islam in Indonesia. "Due to compulsory religion in Indonesia, there is a huge diversity of practitioners of Islam. For some, it's part of their daily routine. Others feel they belong less and are Muslim because they have to choose a religion."

Pluralism creates opportunities

Therefore, it is not only Islam and environmental protection that need to be reconciled in the long-term, but also different social groups.

Many experts say that a comprehensive, whole-of-society approach is needed. Fachruddin sees Indonesia's pluralism as a great opportunity. "We learn a lot from traditions from before Islam. Because of our democratic situation in Indonesia, we respect not only nature and the

environment, but all people and their ideas."

Ibnu Fikri also gained this impression in his fieldwork in Indonesian communities. He describes it as a "cultural environmental awareness," an interplay of religion, traditions and local practices that encourages people to protect the environment.

Even if there is a long way to go, Islam can still provide a strong source of inspiration for many.

*This article was originally published on Deutsche Welle (DW), authored by Enno Hinnz. It is reprinted with the kind permission from Deutsche Welle.
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THE ENGLISH ISLAMIC BOOKSHOP



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SUNDAY
9.30AM - 1.00PM

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MCAS
Darul Arqam

English Islamic Bookshop Open House

The English Islamic Bookshop held its Open House on a Saturday, 16 July 2022. The Association was abuzz with activities for the kids, including Sand Art and Popcorn Station. Treats of popcorn and teh tarik were also available for our guests.



SAVING TRUTH & BEAUTY

The Destruction of Nature and the Islamic Solution



BY RHAMIS KENT

Rhamis Kent is a consultant with formal training in mechanical engineering (University of Delaware, B.S.M.E. '95) and permaculture-based regenerative whole systems design serving as a registered certified Permaculture Design instructor with PRI Australia. He is a former co-director of the Permaculture Research Institute (PRI). Rhamis has taught Permaculture Design (formal certification and short intensive courses) in Palestine/occupied West Bank, Greece, Ethiopia, Yemen, Turkey, Thailand, Malaysia, Italy, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, and The United States. He has also performed

additional consultancy work on projects in Spain, Colombia, Somaliland, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Oman, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Western Sahara, and Iraq.

Mr. Kent currently serves as a consultant with United Designers International, a Supervisory Board member of The Netherlands-registered non-profit Ecosystem Restoration Camps Foundation, and as a Trustee and Implementation Team member at Plant for Peace Foundation (UK). He is also a co-founder of the IGE-PEARL (Islamic Gift Economy - Program for Ethical Appropriate and Regenerative Livelihoods).

Introduction

The destruction of nature can be understood as a running indictment of the collective character and state of the human species. The ecological health of a given place mirrors the true ethical, spiritual, and psychological condition of its inhabitants. The connection between our moral failings and the destruction of the Earth is affirmed by Allah in the Qur'an when He tells us, "Corruption has appeared on the land and sea, by reason of what your hands have earned. That Allah may make them taste a part of that which they have done, in order that they may return."^[1] History is strewn with catastrophes rooted in the application of erroneous cosmological and epistemological assumptions, and a failure to properly translate what is being perceived into appropriate responses to the world—and the reality—humans find themselves occupying. This delusional misunderstanding of one's self and one's surroundings produces repeatable and predictable consequences. This paper examines some of these misunderstandings, using the Islamic tradition as a reference point, in an attempt to identify solutions for a clearly persistent human problem. Our objective is to highlight the clear moral and ethical injunctions found in the Qur'an

and Prophetic Traditions, which together comprise a distinct framework of comportment towards nature that offers a practical alternative to the ruinous path humanity finds itself traversing.

The Qur'an, referring to the role designated for Adam and his kind, recounts, "And [mention] when your Lord said to the angels, 'Indeed, I will make upon the Earth a steward (khalifa).'"^[2]

The angels' response indicates an awareness, even at the moment of humanity's genesis, of this species' potential for profound evil: "They (the angels) said, 'Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare your praise and sanctify You?'" To this, Allah gives a decisive rebuke: "I know that which you do not know." And then, we are told: "He taught Adam the names—all of them."^[3]

According to broad scholarly consensus, the names are the Divine Names or Attributes of Allah reflected in His creation—including human beings: "We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth. Is it not enough that your Lord is a Witness over all things?"^[4]

These verses provide a cosmological, cosmogonical, epistemological, and teleological explanation for how human beings should orient themselves in relation to the abode they've been situated within. If the world is indeed an expression of Divine Attributes—or, as some have said, meanings rendered into objects and images—belief in and reverence for Allah demands that it be dealt with in a manner that ensures its preservation and nurtures its ability to thrive. That is what would qualify as a sincere display of gratitude for the gifts bestowed—and gratitude, ultimately, is the key to saving the Earth and ourselves.





A Dilemma of History and Humanity

In his book *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*,^[5] Dr. Jared Diamond identifies five factors that have historically contributed to civilizational collapse: climate change, hostile neighbors, collapse of essential trading partners, environmental problems, and failure to adapt to environmental issues.

He also lists 12 environmental problems facing mankind today, the first eight of which have historically contributed to the collapse of past societies:

1. Deforestation and habitat destruction
2. Soil problems (erosion, salinization, and soil fertility losses)
3. Water management problems
4. Overhunting
5. Overfishing
6. Effects of introduced (invasive) species on native species
7. Overpopulation
8. Increased per-capita impact of people

Furthermore, he says four new factors may contribute to the weakening and collapse of present and future societies:

1. Anthropogenic climate change
2. Accumulation of toxins in the environment
3. Energy shortages
4. Full human utilization of the Earth's photosynthetic capacity

Interestingly, the top three factors listed (deforestation and habitat destruction, soil problems, and water management problems) share the same origin: all are products of the sustained degradation of landscapes due to human mismanagement.

Even the COVID-19 global pandemic—along with a number of other relatively recent viral outbreaks such as Ebola, SARS-CoV, MERS-CoV, H1N1 aka “swine flu,” Nipah, even malaria—is directly linked to increasing rates of deforestation (particularly in

[1] Qur'an 30:41.

[2] Qur'an 2:30.

[3] Qur'an 2:30–31.

[4] Qur'an 41:53.

[5] Jared Diamond, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*

(New York: Penguin Books/Penguin Group, 2011).

[6] Gus Fisher,

“Deforestation and Monoculture Farming Spread

COVID-19 and Other Diseases,” *Truthout*, May 12, 2020, <https://truthout.org/articles/deforestation-and-monoculture-farming-spread-covid-19-and-other-diseases/>.

[7] Jared Diamond,

“The Worst Mistake in the History of the Human Race,” *Discover* 8, no. 5 (1987): 64–66, <https://web.cs.ucdavis.edu/~rogaway/classes/188/materials/Diamond-TheWorstMistakeInTheHistoryOfTheHumanRace.pdf>.

tropical regions like Southeast Asia).^[6] These phenomena are so closely correlated that the rate of deforestation in a given area was found to be the number one predictor of where the next pandemic will most likely emerge. Approximately 60 percent of new infectious disease outbreaks over the past few decades were animal-borne—or zoonotic—diseases, including the aforementioned viral outbreaks. Climate change is anticipated to multiply this threat.

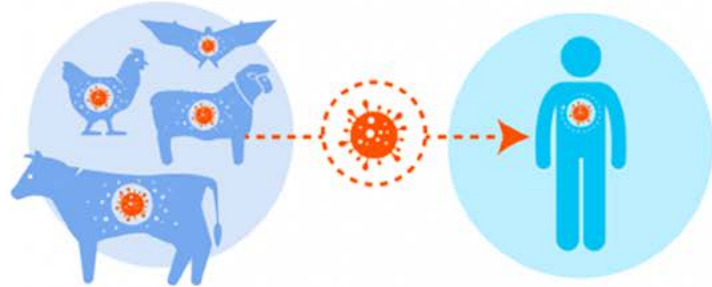
According to many conventional accounts, the advent of agriculture introduced us to the common crises that have marked human life on Earth for the past 7000 years. Dr. Jared Diamond, for instance, reckons that agriculture was the worst mistake in the history of the human race.^[7] The food surpluses generated by intensive agriculture led to the development of a variety of new “labor-saving” technologies and fields of specialization including segments of the population serving in policing and military capacities (i.e., the development of standing armies and professional militaries)—mostly to protect the relatively rich along with their property from the poor and destitute, as well as from invading bands of itinerant raiders making a living by plundering the accumulated wealth of sedentary societies.

Figure 1:

The following information is from  UNEP

What are Zoonoses?

Zoonoses are diseases transmitted from animals to humans.



Source: UNEP Fingers 2016 Report

Zoonoses make up

60%

of all infectious diseases in humans

Zoonoses are responsible for

75%

of all emerging infectious diseases

What's causing the increase in zoonosis today?



Deforestation and other land use changes



Illegal and poorly regulated wildlife trade



Intensified agriculture and livestock production



Antimicrobial resistance



Climate change

Source: UNEP Fingers 2016 Report

Rediscovering our Role

There is history of Muslims' engagement with agriculture and cultivation of land, as relayed through the *Filāḥa*^[8] texts. Guy Theodore Wrench's book *Reconstruction by Way of the Soil*^[9] chronicles a markedly different set of outcomes—as told mostly by European historians—on the basis of the formidable skill, knowledge, and acumen employed by Muslim cultivators:

The Arabs had even a greater aptitude for agriculture than for letters and arts. What means of irrigation are now found in Andalusia were made by them.^[10]

In short, they had irrigated and cultivated the land so excellently that it was befitting to call Andalusia a garden.^[11]

Agriculture and horticulture were developed to an extent never heard of before.^[12]

Wrench explains that this was made possible by prioritizing and acting in accordance with Islam's ethically-based cosmological, epistemological, and metaphysical framework. It is to this framework that we now turn.

In his book *Al-Dharī'a ilā makārim al-sharī'a* (The Path to the Noble Qualities of the Sacred Law), the Persian scholar Abū al-Qāsim al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad, better known as al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī (d. c. 1108), wrote about what he understood to be the existential role of the human being per the Islamic tradition. He stated:

Man has three specific functions.

① **Cultivate and prosper in the earth ('imārat al-ard)**
*"He brought you out from the earth and made you inhabit it" (Qur'an 11:61).
 He should obtain his livelihood from earth, for himself and others.*

② **Worship God**
"I have not created jinn and mankind except to worship Me" (Qur'an 51:56). This means man should obey God's commands and prohibitions.

③ **Vicegerency**
This is mentioned in: "... and [I will] make you successors in the land and, then, [I will] observe what you will do" (Qur'an 7:129). This [vicegerency] is the imitation of God in accordance with man's ability to rule by applying the noble qualities of the Law, which are wisdom, justice, forbearance, beneficence, and graciousness. Their purpose is to gain Paradise and proximity to God.^[13]

What is particularly fascinating about this quote is that two of the three purposes noted ('imārat al-ard and khalīfa) deal with the manner in which humanity comports itself in relation to the creation. Worship ('ibādāt) accounts for only one of the three and even seemingly mundane acts—such as planting a tree—could count as worship if that is the intention in performing them. The famous hadith of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ confirms this: *"Actions are according to intentions, and everyone will get what was intended..."*^[14]

The dangers accompanying the corruption of the creation are unequivocally communicated within the Qur'an and hadith literature:

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي
الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ
أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ
بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَرْجِعُونَ

Corruption has appeared on the land and sea, by reason of what your hands have earned. That Allah may make them taste a part of that which they have done, in order that they may return.^[15]



'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās understood this verse to mean:

Corruption has appeared through the death of cattle, drought, lack of food and vegetation in the plains, mountains, countryside, and wilderness as well as in townships and cities because of the transgressions committed by people, (that He may make them taste) that He may make them be seized by (a part of that which they have done) of transgressions, (in order that they may repent) in order that they may repent of their sins and thus be relieved.^[16]

The Qur'anic and hadith references are clear and unambiguous in communicating the importance of humanity's conduct with creation—and how nature's resulting condition reveals the true quality of a person's character.

وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِّنْ
مُّصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ
أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُو عَنْ كَثِيرٍ

And whatever misfortune befalls you, it is because of what your hands have earned. And He pardons much.^[16] *The world is sweet and verdant, and verily Allah has made you stewards in it, and He sees how you acquit yourselves.*^[17]

Yet another clear warning provided in hadith:

"Beware of the earth for it is your mother/unavoidable abode/home. No one does good or evil on her except that she will speak of it (on the Day of Qiyāma)."^[18]

Nature's ability to expose falsehood is often underappreciated. In many ways it manifests truth, and does so elegantly and beautifully. Plato is famously quoted to have said that "beauty is the splendor of truth." We should also be familiar with the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stating:

"Allah is beautiful and He loves beauty."^[19]

Indeed, Truth and true beauty are indissoluble.

Faith traditions have been gifted to us to explain the Truth of Reality, the purpose of our existence, supplying a metaphysical map for navigating the human condition. If taken seriously, they should affect the way we think and how we behave in the world—determining if we decide to serve as divinely sanctioned exploiters or nurturers.

Recall that our father, Adam, was taught "the names" of

[8] The Filaha Texts Project, <http://www.filaha.org/>.

[9] Guy Theodore Wrench, *Reconstruction By Way of the Soil* (London: Faber and Faber, 1946), 262.

[10] Monsieur Gustav le Bon, *La Civilisation des Arabes*, 1884, as quoted in Wrench, 169.

[11] Monsieur Sédillot, *Histoire Générale des Arabes*,

1877, as quoted in Wrench, 169.

[12] Martin Hume, as quoted in Wrench, 169 (referring to "the farming art of the Spanish Arabs").

[13] Abū'l-Qāsim al-Husayn ibn Muhammad al-Rāghib al-Isfahānī, "al-Dhari'a ila makarim al-shari'a (The Path to the Noble Qualities of the Sacred Law)," <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54e6208ee4b05860a4600103/t/595a4c9a9f74562cf8fb1225/1499090076162/Raghib+Path+to+Virtue+Translation.pdf>.

[14] Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, no. 1, bk. 1, hadith 1, <https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1>.

[15] Qur'an 30:41.

everything, a privilege which rendered our status higher than that of the angels:

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا
ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ
فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ
هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

And He taught Adam the names—all of them. Then He showed them to the angels and said, "Inform Me of the names of these, if you are truthful."^[20]

Consider the significance of knowing what to call things. These designations provide insights into the existential reality, and right, of creation. Endowed with that knowledge, we are also equipped with an understanding of how to properly transact and conduct our lives.

William Chittick addressed the importance of this point in his piece Ibn 'Arabi on the Benefit of Knowledge, and it is worth quoting at length:

All of creation makes demands upon man, because he is created in God's form and has been appointed His vicegerent (khalīfa). He has the God-given duty, woven into his original created nature (fitra), to recognize the haqq [right] of things and to act accordingly. It is this haqq that must be known if his knowledge is to be true, right, worthy, and appropriate, for this haqq is identical with the khalq [creation] that God has established.

In short, beneficial knowledge is knowledge of 'the what' and 'the why' of ourselves and of things. In order to know a thing truly and benefit from the knowledge, we need to know what it is—its reality (haqīqa), which is nothing but its khalq and its haqq—and we need to know how we should respond to it. What exactly does it demand from us, rightly, truly, and appropriately? To put this into a formula, tahqīq means knowing the haqīqa of God and things and acting according to their haqq; Realization is to know things as they truly are and act appropriately in every circumstance.^[21]

Knowledge acts as a safeguard against unconsciously transacting our lives as oppressors and destroyers—violators of an order deservedly expecting its right and reality to be recognized and honored. With knowledge comes adab, and it is from adab that we develop the noble character and ethical comportment (akhlāq) needed to conduct human affairs in a manner consistent with our Reality. Having access to true knowledge prevents us from being subject to the conjecturing, hypothesizing, and theorizing of our own selves and other people—or stated another way, true knowledge liberates us from the tyranny of mankind's ideas.

وَإِنْ تُطِيعْ أَكْثَرَ مَنْ
فِي الْأَرْضِ يُضِلُّوكَ عَنْ
سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ
إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا
يَخْرُصُونَ

And if you were to obey most of those on earth, they would lead you away from Allah's Way. They follow nothing but assumptions and do nothing but lie.^[22]

[16] Abdullah ibn 'Abbas and Ibn Ya'qub al-Firuzabadi, Tafsir Ibn 'Abbas: The Great Commentaries of the Holy Qur'an (Volume II), ed. Yousef Meri, trans. Mokrane Guezou (Amman, Jordan: The Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought: Fons Vitae, 2008).
[16] Qur'an 42:30.
[17] Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, no. 2742, bk. 49, hadith 12, <https://sunnah.com/muslim:2742>.
[18] Fayḍul Qādir, Ḥadīth: 3260, As-Sirajul Munir, vol. 2 pg. 158, Al-Mu'jamul Kabir, Ḥadīth: 4596, Majma'uz

Zawaid, vol.1 pg.241. Also see Targhib, Ḥadīth: 312; Grade: Hasan Li Ghairihi. <https://hadithanswers.com/beware-of-sinning-on-the-earth/>; Also refer to Qur'an 99:1-8.
[19] Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, no. 91a; al-Mu'jam al-Awsat, no. 6906.
[20] Qur'an 2:31.
[21] William C. Chittick, "Ibn 'Arabi on the Benefit of Knowledge," in The Essential Sophia, ed. Seyyid Hossein Nasr and Katherine O'Brien (Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom, 2006).
[22] Qur'an 6:116.

[23] Qur'an 18:55.
[24] Qur'an 18:57.
[25] 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭalīb, related by Yahyā ibn Adam al-Qurashī in Kitāb al-kharaj on the authority of Sa'īd ad-Dabbī.
[26] Alice Bolton, "Ibn Khaldun on Luxury and the Destruction of Civilizations," Fountain 117 (May-June 2017), <https://fountainmagazine.com/2017/issue-117-may-june-2017/ibn-khaldun-on-luxury-and-the-destruction-of-civilizations>.

Improperly interfacing with the creation guarantees certain repercussions. Human history is littered with an extensive catalog of civilizational collapses, disasters, and catastrophic events. These episodes are not random or without cause, as human error in the form of ignorance, intemperance, and hubris was more often than not the catalyst. Distinct, manifestly discernible patterns await our observation of them. This cyclical rising and falling—exaltation and abasement—follows a narrative arc that is both comforting and frightening in its predictability.

Our inability to read and decipher the proverbial Book of Creation—and the critical messages it communicates about our behavior—imperils us. Our apparent reluctance to learn this language, our dismissal of it as undeserving

of deliberation, is all the more disappointing given that we are beings designed to read and decipher patterns.

The Qur'an reminds us of this:

وَمَا مَنَعَ النَّاسَ أَنْ
يُؤْمِنُوا إِذْ جَاءَهُمُ الْهُدَى
وَيَسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ
تَأْتِيَهُمْ سُنَّةُ الْأَوَّلِينَ أَوْ
يَأْتِيَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ قُبُلًا

When guidance came to the people, nothing prevented them from believing and asking forgiveness from their Lord but the fact that the pattern of previous peoples did not occur to them or that the punishment did not appear before their eyes.^[23]

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ ذُكِّرَ
بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِ فَأَعْرَضَ عَنْهَا
وَنَسِيَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ
إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ
أَكِنَّةً أَنْ يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِي
آذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا وَإِنْ تَدْعُهُمْ
إِلَى الْهُدَى فَلَنْ يَهْتَدُوا
إِذَا أَبَدًا

And who could do a greater wrong than someone who is reminded of the Signs of his Lord and then turns away from them, forgetting all that he has done before? We have placed covers on their hearts, preventing them from understanding it, and heaviness in their ears. Though you call them to guidance, they will nonetheless never be guided.^[24]

Partake of [the Earth] gladly, so long as you are a benefactor, not a despoiler; a cultivator, not a destroyer.^[25]



[27] Qur'an 4:119.

[28] Qur'an 2:205-6.

[29] One of the interesting lessons learned from observing nature is that insects typically considered to be pests starve on healthy plants—they don't offer anything to eat such as simple sugars and amino acids. This is explained by trophobiosis theory. ("Earth Repair: A Unified Theory," World Permaculture Association, <https://worldpermacultureassociation.com/earth-repair-unified-theory/>.) Similarly, locusts are found to plague landscapes in regions that have become degraded mostly due to human mismanagement (for example, from destructive agricultural practices or overgrazing of domesticated livestock). Our societies, too, once weakened and diseased, are prone to



The Human Species as Producer-Cultivator or Consumer-Destroyer

Most of us function in the world as consumers rather than producers. If we're honest, this is what we've been conditioned to be since birth in an age dominated by industrial consumerism—especially within the context of so-called “first world” nations and economies. Nothing less is required of us if this particular system is to continue to function.

We are defined and valued more as consumers than as citizens. This is all but confirmed by the practice of measuring the health of nation-states by their Gross Domestic Product (GDP), a metric overwhelmingly determined by consumer activity. Producing and consuming our own goods and services within a self-contained, independent community (describing an autarky or autarkic system) would fail to register as “productive economic activity” from the standpoint of the consumer-driven GDP metric. The operational logic

of modern economies thus demands ever-expanding consumption of products and services. If consumers became their own producers of goods, either as individuals or communities, consumer-based economies would crater. This system is logically suspect and ethically bankrupt. According to modern economics, taking responsibility for our own lives and that of our communities by providing ourselves with what we need is an activity without value.

Our era is marked by the presumption that technology has made us more efficiently and effectively productive, generally speaking—which it has in many respects. It has also made us more efficiently and effectively destructive, and more oblivious of this fact due to the way technological convenience distances us from its deleterious impacts. With modern technology comes an endemic opacity that mediates our direct experience of the outside world. The

real world is easily confused with the one that has been reconfigured for us based on our preferences as consumers. Protracted, thoughtless action has never been so easily enabled—nor the volume of distraction and misinformation so overwhelming. This opacity compounds our blindness to the ways in which our inability to moderate our behavior is ravaging the world we inhabit.

The 14th-century historiographer and historian Abū Zayd ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Khaldūn al-Ḥaḍramī, more popularly known as Ibn Khaldūn, warned that pursuing the pleasures of civilization^[31] has repeatedly led to civilizational destruction through the corruption of human beings—rendering them susceptible to moral, ethical, spiritual, social, physical, political, and economic decay.

The places such degraded people inhabit merely reflect their collective state. This seemingly insatiable appetite for constantly expanding levels of wealth, luxury, comfort—and, for some, power—has been the primary driver of the destruction wrought by human beings on Earth and its living

systems from time immemorial. What we are seeing now is not a new phenomenon. It's an old story dressed in new clothes. The demolition of nature is simply being accomplished with more sophisticated technology capable of amplifying our character flaws in ways we've never imagined possible.

This destruction is harder to recognize, or deem worthy of our attention, in a world offering endless methods of keeping us entertained, distracted, titillated, and made comfortably numb—all while being so satisfied and impressed with what our hands have created.

Forgetting our Role

Regardless of the worldly causes that may have brought about this situation, Allah is ultimately in control, and we must ask ourselves honestly, with deep introspection, why we are facing this situation. As evidenced by the above, Muslims have tragically underperformed in offering a more comprehensive and broadly beneficial Islamic alternative capable of obsoleting the current dysfunctional arrangement. Collectively, many Muslims have also come to endorse a “misenchanted way of life” that tacitly—if not explicitly—approves of the generation of riches and profit at the expense of beauty and truth.

The credibility and sincerity of those claimants professing a love for Allah, but showing little regard for what Allah has created, should be called into question. To participate in the careless handling and cavalier destruction of things that are manifestations of Divine Attributes—Signs of

The Divine—serves as an indictment against us. Need we be reminded where this motivation to corrupt what Allah has made perfect emanates from?

وَلَا ضَلَمَهُمْ وَلَا مَئِينَهُمْ
وَلَا مَرْزُقَهُمْ فَلَْيَبْتِئَنَّ ءَاذَانُ
الْأَنْعَامِ وَلَا مَرْزُقَهُمْ فَلَْيُغَيِّرَنَّ
خَلْقَ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَتَّخِذِ
الشَّيْطَانَ وَلِيًّا مِّنْ دُونِ
اللَّهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ خُسْرَانًا
مُّبِينًا

[Satan said]: “And I will surely lead them astray, and arouse desires in them. I shall command them and they will slit the ears of cattle; I shall command them and they will change the creation of Allah.” Whoever takes Satan as a protector in place of Allah has clearly lost everything.^[27]



وَإِذَا تَوَلَّى سَعَى فِي
الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ
الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ ۚ وَاللَّهُ لَا
يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ
أَخَذَتْهُ الْعِزَّةُ بِالْإِثْمِ ۚ
فَحَسْبُهُ جَهَنَّمُ ۚ وَلَبِئْسَ
الْمِهَادُ

Among the people there is someone whose words about the life of this world excite your admiration, and he calls Allah to witness what is in his heart, while he is in fact the most hostile of adversaries. When he leaves you, he goes about the earth corrupting it, destroying crops and animals. Allah does not love corruption. When told to have taqwā of Allah, he is seized by pride which drives him to wrongdoing...^[28]

If the creation consists of Allah's Signs, and those Signs serve as reminders of the Divine, what happens when those Signs are removed from the Earth or allowed to be continually corrupted, distorted, degraded, or destroyed altogether? If these corrupted Signs become the basis of our reflection and remembrance, how would our perspectives not also grow corrupted, distorted, and degraded? What precarious world do we produce by substituting for those Signs a mirror of humanity's basest desires, whims, and caprices?^[29]

This destruction of nature is perpetrated and tolerated in the pursuit of economic interests—a state of affairs seemingly accepted, largely, by people who identify themselves as Muslim (likewise by self-identified Christians and Jews, or “People of the Book”). As noted by the Malaysian scholar Dr. ‘Adi Setia,^[30] a properly Islamically-oriented cosmological, cosmogonical,

and epistemological worldview sees the natural and cultural resources provided by our Merciful Creator as blessings and bounties that are, in truth, unlimited in principle. A functional worldview tethered to reality would regard these resources as abundant, and the material needs, wants, and desires of human beings as limited—and rightfully so. This particular understanding has been inverted, and its inversion has apparently been legitimized and accepted by people who ought to know better.

Building on this premise, Dr. Setia argues that our beliefs demand that these resources be considered favors from the realm of transcendence, eliciting an ethical and cognitive response rooted in gratitude and ultimately bringing about contentment. Therefore, the human being—if properly oriented and aligned—will take according to his or her needs, but not his or her greed and ambition



“pest attacks”—diagnostic indicators of the absence of something crucially important. To escape such attacks, communities require a habitat and a means of sustaining the people who comprise them. As put by Bill

Mollison: “We lay waste to our lives in proportion to the way in which the systems we support lay waste to the environment. Although societies for social responsibility are rapidly forming, we need to expand the concept

to social and environmental responsibility, and to create our own financial and employment strategies in those areas.” See Bill Mollison, *Permaculture: A Designer's Manual* (Tyalgum, Australia: Tagari Publications, 1988).

to accumulate. Gratitude then becomes an existential and psychological state of being that demonstrates this observed reality of abundance in both the material and spiritual sense.

We are provided for abundantly if we acknowledge the biophysical limits of the planet, and we acknowledge those limits by living our lives according to metaphysical realities. In fact, the planet's living systems will over-deliver. The problem for the human species is that we tend to consistently underperform—and it still delivers in spite of us.^[31]

According to Dr. 'Adi Setia, *Desires are in fact limited by various dimensions of objective biophysical realities—and ultimately by death... Sound desire is self-limiting, but the consumerist rendering of the world isn't particularly fond of that idea—so we're constantly artificially stimulated through perpetual ubiquitous marketing and advertising. We do not exist in a neutral milieu in that regard. The paradox of 'earthly life' is that we simply need to respect the biophysical 'limits' of nature—which essentially consists of having proper adab (manners, etiquette, adherence to protocol) with creation—if we are to enjoy 'unlimited' bounties. Additionally, desires are limited*

because enjoyments are limited, or bounded; that's an objective fact since we know experientially that unbounded enjoyments and desires degenerate into suffering and humiliation by way of addiction.^[32]

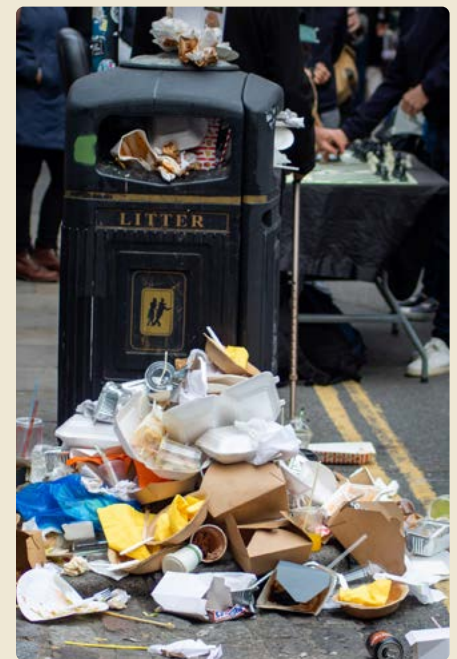
أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ
إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ
عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ وَحْتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِ
وَقَلْبِهِ وَجَعَلَ عَلَىٰ بَصَرِهِ
غِشَاوَةً فَمَنْ يَهْدِيهِ مِنْ
بَعْدِ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

Have you seen [O Prophet] those who have taken their own desires as their god? [And so] Allah left them to stray knowingly, sealed their hearing and hearts, and placed a cover on their sight. Who then can guide them after Allah? Will you [all] not then be mindful?^[33]

A desire or an enjoyment, beyond a certain limit or boundary, ceases to be so. That's the nature of mortal life (i.e., it becomes self-destructive and hence not really a true desire, for no person desires self-destruction). Hence, greed (or 'pathological desire') is the desire of the insane. Greed is, at its core,

wastefulness—a quintessentially "Iblisian" quality and behavioral archetype. As such, it is also essentially self-destructive. As indicated by the following hadith:

Ka'b ibn 'Ujra reported: A man passed by the Prophet ﷺ, peace and blessings be upon him, and the companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw his endurance and vigor. They said, "O Messenger of Allah, if only this man was in the way of Allah!" The Prophet ﷺ said, "If he goes out striving for his small children, he is in the way of Allah. If he goes out striving for his elderly parents, he is in the way of Allah. If he goes out striving for himself to abstain from wrongdoing, he is in the way of Allah. If he goes out vainly and boastfully, he is in the way of Satan."^[34]



[30] 'Adi Setia, "Mu'amalah and the Revival of the Islamic Gift Economy," *Islam and Science* 9, no. 1 (Summer 2011).

[31] This is principally the charge, for example, made by the animals against the humans in the court of the jinn

king, referring to the Ikhwān al-Safā's famous text: "Once given words, the animals have much to say, both about their own plight and about the human condition. They present themselves not as mere objects of study but as

subjects with an outlook and interests of their own. That casts the essay into a moral mode: the animals warmly appreciate the bounty of Creation but passionately criticize human domination and systematically indict

In an alternate wording of the same hadith:

The Prophet ﷺ—Allah bless and give him peace—was sitting one day with his Companions, and they observed a strong, sturdy youth setting out early to work. They said, “Woe unto this man; would that his youth and strength were spent in the path of Allah.” The Prophet—Allah bless and give him peace—said, “Do not say this; for if he works for himself in order to restrain himself from begging and to be independent of people, then he is in the path of Allah. If he works for his impoverished parents or for his impoverished children so as to enrich and suffice them, then he is in the path of Allah. If [however] he works for the sake of showing off (tafākḥuran) and accumulation (takāthuran) [of wealth], then he is in the path of Satan.”^[35]

That the earning of wealth for selfish, self-aggrandizing purposes puts one on the path of Satan is unsurprising, as such behavior is wasteful and thus demonic:

إِنَّ الْمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ
الشَّيْطَانِ ط وَكَانَ
الشَّيْطَانُ لِرَبِّهِ كَفُورًا

Indeed, the wasteful are brothers of the devils, and ever has Satan been to his Lord ungrateful.^[36]



Setia goes on to highlight that the ecological desolation we see within both the cultural and natural landscape is consistent with the ingratitude that stems from secular disbelief, where scarcity is perceived as the default condition. Accompanying this assumption is a crippling fear of insufficiency and paucity. Competition and hoarding logically follow. Without belief in a Merciful and Generous Creator who provides abundantly, anxiety fuels the greedy and wasteful depletion of resources while blinding one to its True Source, reinforcing a negative feedback loop marked by perpetual ingratitude and unending yearning. It is within this state that the “pathology of consumption”—where satisfaction is ephemeral, and disillusionment and ennui are all too familiar—leaves its signature upon us and upon our world.

Imam Al-Ghazālī stated that Allah has made the afterlife the abode of reimbursement and chastisement, and this world the abode of struggle,

deception, and tribulation.

^[37] Our struggle in the dunyā is not, and should not be, confined to concern about the afterlife. Imam Al-Ghazālī saw our worldly livelihood as a means of return to the afterlife, viewing the world as a seedbed for the Hereafter. There is a clear incentive to live Islam’s ethics for both worldly and otherworldly benefits. Our livelihoods depend on the manner in which we transact our lives with Allah’s creation and our ability to render what is rightfully due to everything comprising it. This is one of the most significant and practical expressions of sincere gratitude.

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ
لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِنْ كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ
عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ

And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed, “If you are grateful, I will certainly give you more. But if you are ungrateful, surely My punishment is severe.”^[38]

Concluding thoughts and solutions

The epistemology, cosmology, and cosmogony of the Islamic intellectual tradition pellucidly explains the importance of transacting with the natural world as a means of manifesting one's moral and ethical goodness. A famous and oft-cited saying tells us: *He who knows himself knows his Lord.*^[39]

لَهُ مُعَقِّبَاتٌ مِّنْ بَيْنِ
يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ يَحْفَظُونَهُ
مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا
يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا
مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ وَإِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ
بِقَوْمٍ سُوءًا فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُ
وَمَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ وَالٍ

For each one there are successive angels before and behind, protecting them by Allah's command. Indeed, Allah would never change a people's state [of favor] until they change their own state [of faith]. And if it is Allah's Will to torment a people, it can never be averted, nor can they find a protector other than Him.^[40]

The Qur'an also informs us: This may, in part, be understood as an exhortation to remember and reflect upon our human origins—the reasons we were brought into existence and the functional role we were tasked with fulfilling. To know ourselves is to realize that we weren't made to serve our own selfish pursuits and desires. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya affirms this point when he states in his al-Fawā'id:

Whoever desires to purify their heart, then let them prefer Allah to their own desires.^[41]

We were not endowed with our capabilities for the purpose of leading a life of constant entertainment and self-indulgence. Humans aren't here to remake the world in the image of our personal preferences. The Creation—of which we comprise one of many aspects—was made to manifest the Majesty and Beauty of The One that brought it out of nothingness so that He may be known by means of it.

This world was made as a test to prove our mettle and display our qualities of character. It will either testify as a proof for us, providing a vehicle to reflect

its underlying rationales as the products of human arrogance... The ingenious and insightful design of every creature, say the animals, testifies to God's creative and providential beneficence. But the natural piety, generosity, courage, and trust of the animals model virtues that human beings too often lack. The animals

become living, speaking rebukes of human waywardness, faithlessness, negligence, and insensitivity." See Lenn E. Goodman and Richard McGregor, eds. and trans., *The Case of the Animals versus Man Before the King of the Jinn* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 696.

[32] Correspondence via WhatsApp with Dr 'Adi Setia,

August 29-30, 2021.

[33] Qur'an 45:23. As put by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya in his *Al-Fawā'id* (see footnote 51): "Whoever loves this worldly life will [overestimate] its value and make himself a slave to it—and it will humiliate them. And whoever neglects it will notice their own great value—

Divine attributes bestowing benefit on everything we come into contact with—or it will mirror the disorder, dysfunction, and evil residing in our hearts and made manifest by our limbs. Our inability to rein in and sublimate our worst tendencies is on trial. Yet this is the real fight too many of us have run away from—the battle against ourselves:

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ
كُرْهُ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ
تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ
لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا
وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ
وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

Fighting has been made obligatory upon you [believers], though you dislike it. Perhaps you dislike something which is good for you and like something which is bad for you. Allah knows and you do not know.^[42]

This is the deception we have tragically fallen prey to: not applying the call to fight, first and foremost, to our own

selves against our own selves. Our failure has lost us much truth and beauty in this world.

As stated previously, to know yourself is to know Allah. To know Allah is to know Majesty and Beauty, so that we, too, may serve as signposts for these qualities through our daily conduct—not only through our worship, but also by the manner in which our worship conditions and inspires us to be majestic and beautiful in our worldly transactions, understanding that they have otherworldly consequences.

As explained by Dr. Othman 'Abdur-Rahman Llewellyn,^[43] a methodological approach to utilizing, and transacting with, nature may be detailed in light of the goals and objectives of the Sacred Law. Everything in existence was created and imbued with a unique and innate value. The purpose of all created things is to serve The Creator by playing their designated role in maintaining balance and order, ensuring the functional integrity of Creation as a whole. All sentient beings are bound together in this endeavor. Human beings are tasked with the special responsibility of trusteeship and stewardship of the earth.

To show magnanimity towards the entirety of Creation is to embody ihsān (excellence), as exemplified by its resulting practical benefit, moral rectitude, and holistic beauty. If the central aim of Islamic law is to facilitate the manifestation of excellence, and to ensure comprehensive well-being, it could be said that environmental stewardship is an expression of iṣlāh (improvement, betterment), as manifested in the revival of degraded land and the enrichment of the earth. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ clearly indicates that the fructification and beautification of the earth is a thoroughly ethical act: *Whoever revives dead land, for him is [to be found] reward in it; and whatever any creature seeking food eats of it shall be reckoned as charity from him. There is no Muslim who plants a tree or sows a field, and a human, bird, or animal eats from it, but it shall be reckoned as charity from him.*^[44]

Shaykh Abdul-Hakim Murad (Dr. Timothy Winter) made these points central to his 'Īd al-Fiṭr khuṭba titled "Sultan of the Heart." In it, he outlined what attitude we need to adopt and what practical steps we

and it will serve them and it (this world) will humiliate itself for them."

[34] Al-Mu'jam al-Kabir lil-Ṭabarānī, 19:129, <https://www.abuaminaelias.com/dailyhadithonline/2022/08/26/jihad-supporting-family/> (translation modified); al-Ṭabarānī, al-Mu'jam al-kabir (Cairo: Maktabat Ibn Taymiyah, Dār al-Ṣumay'i, 1983), 19:29, no. 282; authenticated by Shaykh al-Albānī in Ṣaḥīḥ al-jāmi' al-

ṣaḥīr (Damascus: al-Maktab al-Islāmi, 1969), 1:301, no. 1428; al-Haythamī also said the narrators were reliable in Majma' al-Zawā'id (Cairo: Maktabat al-Qudsi, 1933), 4:325, no. 7708. Translated by Abu Amina Elias. [35] Al-Ṭabarānī, al-Mu'jam al-Ṣaḥīr (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmi, 1985), 2:148, no. 940. [36] Qur'an 17:27. [37] Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-

Ghazālī, The Book of the Properties of Earning and Living (Kitab Adab al-Kasb wa al-Ma'ash), trans. with introduction and notes by 'Adi Setia (Kuala Lumpur: IBFIM, 2013).

[38] Qur'an 14:7.

[39] Abu Nu'aym al-Isfahani, Ḥilyat al-awliya' wa-ṭabaqāt al-aṣfiyā', 2nd ed. (Beirut, Lebanon: Dar al-Kotob Illmiyah, 2018), 10:208, <https://kitaabun.com/shopping3/>



need to take to begin rectifying our collective situation, not only as people of faith but as a human species. He first declares Islam “the religion of nature” (al-dīn al-fiṭra), the Qur’an “the book of nature” and the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ “the prophet of nature.” All clearly command us to be cultivators and greeners of Allah’s creation through planting, sowing, and repairing what has been damaged and destroyed. This is highlighted by Book 41 of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī—The Virtue of Planting and Sowing (Muzāra’a) and Sūrat Al-A’lā.^[45]

Just as importantly, Shaykh Murad eviscerates the “solutions” to modernity’s ecological crisis put forward by the likes of Elon Musk, who wishes to save humanity by taking us to Mars—“a hell,” in Shaykh Murad’s words, of dust, carbon dioxide, and radiation that, even after billions of dollars’ worth of Mars expeditions, has not yet yielded “one single organic particle... not even the tiniest fragment

of something that exists in its trillions within any human body.”^[46]

To abandon our home is to save neither the Earth nor ourselves. We will have to solve our problems right here, in the world that has sustained us for so long—and the solution will demand more than more technology. As Shaykh Murad so eloquently put it:

It seems to be the function of the secular world to destroy while boasting of progress. But it must be the function of the religious majority of mankind, and not just the ummah of Islam, to repair. Where they pull up, we must plant. Where they gorge, we must fast. It is the function of Bani Adam in his role as khulafa of Allah subhana wa ta’ala in His Earth to heal. To fix things. To be those who put [things] right. How strange is the mentality of so many secular people [on] the Earth. Where they see science and technology as leading us into some kind of paradise on Earth. [It’s] not happening. Look at the state of the Earth. Look at the state of people’s minds.

Look at the depression and the anxiety. Look at the collapsing planet beneath our feet. This is not progress.

So what do we do? Every one of us has this answer within reach. We have this blessing way, this way of living in a natural and restrained way within the world which is called the Sunnah of the Chosen One (ﷺ).^[58]

This article was originally published on Yaqeen Institute which can be found at <https://yaqeeninstitute.org/read/paper/saving-truth-and-beauty-the-destruction-of-nature-and-the-islamic-solution>

Disclaimer: The views, opinions, findings, and conclusions expressed in these papers and articles are strictly those of the authors. Furthermore, Yaqeen does not endorse any of the personal views of the authors on any platform. Our team is diverse on all fronts, allowing for constant, enriching dialogue that helps us produce high-quality research.

Sections of this article were subsequently edited out by The Muslim Reader to fit the pages of the magazine. The full article can be found on Yaqeen Institute website at the link above.

^[45] hilyat-awliya-tabaqat-asfiya-arabic-asfahani-p-3430.html.

^[46] Qur’an 13:11.

^[47] Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, Al-Fawa'id: A Collection of Wise Sayings, trans. Bayan Translation Services (Mansoura: Umm Al-Qura, 2004), <https://www.kalamullah.com/Books/AL-FAWAID.pdf>.

^[48] Qur’an 2:216.

^[43] Othman ‘Abd Ar-Rahman Llewellyn, “Islamic Jurisprudence and Environmental Planning,” Journal of King Abdulaziz University: Islamic Economics 1, no. 2 (1404/1984), <http://www.iefpedia.com/english/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/Islamic-Jurisprudence-and-Environmental-Planning-by-Othman-Abd-Ar-Rahman-Llewellyn.pdf>.

^[44] Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, no. 2320, bk. 41, hadith 1, <https://>

sunnah.com/bukhari:2320.

^[45] Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, no. 2320, bk. 41, hadith 1, <https://sunnah.com/bukhari/41>.

^[46] Abdal Hakim Murad, “Sultan of the Heart – Abdal Hakim Murad: Eid Sermon,” YouTube video, May 2, 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5JuAERjKy6Y>.

^[47] Murad, “Sultan of the Heart.”

Official Iftar & Launch of Project Ansar

This year's Official Iftar was held on 23 April 2022, in conjunction with the launch of Project Ansar. The Iftar was graced by the mayor of the South East District, Mr Mohd Fahmi Aliman and the then MCAS President Bro Imran Kuna. The event was attended by X volunteers, members and staff of the Association, celebrating the Holy Month of Ramadhan.



Eid Celebrations



MCAS Staff and Council Members



(from left to right): Brothers Syed Ismail, Shahbaz Ahmad, Ridzuan Wu, Moiz Tyebally, Hamzah Mutalib, Abdul Jalil, Faiz Edwin Ignatious, Imran Kuna and Fadhlur Rahman

This article was originally published on Australian Muslim Times (AMUST), written by Dr Daud Batchelor. It is reprinted with the kind permission of AMUST.

It is God's mercy that while He destroyed the dinosaurs long before Adam and Eve appeared, He allowed their winged descendants – birds – to live on to adorn this planet and charm humanity.

God Almighty draws our attention: *"See you not that it is God Whose praises all beings in the heavens and on earth do celebrate, and the birds with wings outspread. Each knows its own prayer and praise."* (Qur'an 24:41).

Modern science posits that the Nightingale's sonorous song and the excited dawn quorus such as the bower-bird's melodies or whip-bird's

'crack' are mainly intended to attract mates.

This is not incompatible with the view that these birds are also glorifying their Lord. Why wouldn't they?

The Prophet (s) remarked: *"If you were to rely on Allah as He should be relied upon, He would provide for you as He provides for the birds. They go out early in the morning hungry and return in the evening full."* (Tirmidhi).

Bird calls and song are best heard at dawn and dusk – times also when Allah encourages humans to *"glorify your Lord morning and evening."* (Qur'an, 76:25).

Worshippers arriving for fajr prayer at Kuraby Mosque Brisbane are frequently welcomed by raucous kookaburras' laughter.

Humans and birds communicate with each other. Parrots mimic human speech. Humans in empathy mimic bird calls such as in traditional Japanese music (hogaku). At a higher level, humans 'speak' with birds.

Ecologists witnessed an amazing collaboration of the indigenous Yao people in Mozambique communicating two-ways with wild honey-guide birds who lead them to hidden beehives. The Africans then share the booty of honeycombs with the birds.

We have the wonderful Qur'anic example of the Hoopoe bird who reported to Prophet Solomon about Sheba's lovely Queen and her subjects misguidingly worshipping the sun (Quran, 27:20-24).

Birds

on the wing

Glorify

their sustainer Lord

BY DR DAUD BATCHELOR^[1]



Farid ud-Din Attar in his 13th century epic poem "Conference of Birds" narrated about a group of birds led by the Hoopoe (the wisest) coming to realisation of their spiritual achievement through journeying towards God Almighty.

We need to attune ourselves to nature realising that birds hymn praises to Him. Resist Satan who ignores man's spiritual element (ruh) and treats us as clay, and incites us to pollute and destroy nature and its sacred life; thereby preventing nature from glorifying its Lord, as Satan's 'proof' of human baseness.

Let's promote the message that we should restore the natural environment – and

also listen to bird songs to inspire us to start the day seeking God's provisions and thanking Him for untold blessings.

Other winged creatures, glorious angels, also congregate at dawn and before sunset.

Prophet Muhammad (s)

informed that they all *"come together at times of Fajr and Asr prayers. Those who passed the night with you ascend and Allah asks them ... 'In what state did you leave my slaves?'"*

The angels reply, 'When we left them, they were praying and when we reached them they were praying.'" (Bukhari).

Birds flocking at sunset, often seen at shopping centres on trees and overhead wires, could represent a "Conference of Birds" praising Allah.

While doing so the birds may be amazed by 'goings-on' of the humans passing below, some of whom are neglectful preoccupying themselves with other than praising God.

You may exclaim, "How could we know if they chirp about us." We could ask them!

We need a spiritual seeker to recover their language that Solomon knew so we can conclude this matter convincingly.

Dr Daud Batchelor, an Australian Muslim, was Associate Fellow until December 2015 at the International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies Malaysia. He holds an MA in Islamic and Other Civilisations and a Diploma in Islamic Studies from the International Islamic University Malaysia, PhD from University of Malaya, MSc from the University of London, and MEngSc in environmental management from Griffith University. He is co-founder of the Islamic College of Brisbane and currently resides in Brisbane.

All about...

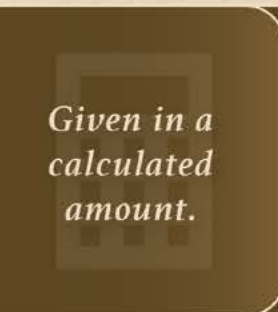
ZAKAT

*To Grow
To Purify
To Bless*

زَكَاةً
Zakaa

الزَّكَاةَ
Az-Zakah

Zakat is...



Types of Zakat

1



زكاة المال

Zakat ul Mal
Zakat on Wealth

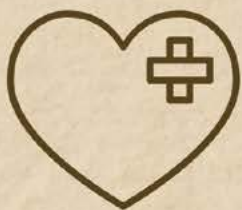
2

زكاة الفطر

Zakat ul Fitr
Zakat on the Individual



Benefits of Zakat



Please pay your zakat at Muslim Converts' Association of Singapore (MCAS).

4 Conditions for Obligatory Zakat

• Muslim By Faith

Zakat is only applicable to Muslims.

• Full Onwership

Implies that the owner should be fully capable of disposing the wealth without being an object of contest by others.

• Nisab

The person's wealth at any point in time in the Hijrah year must reach Nisab, which is equivalent to the market value of 85g of gold.

• Haul

The person's wealth above Nisab must be with the person for at least one Hijrah year.

8 A S N A F

Muallaf

converts to Islam

Amil

officer appointed to collect zakat

Fakir

has no means to sustain his/her daily needs

Miskin

has insufficient means of livelihood to meet his/her basic needs

Riqab

need assistance to pursue their education

Gharmin

in debt and needs assistance to meet his/her basic needs

Fisabilillah

one who strives in the cause of Allah for the betterment of the community

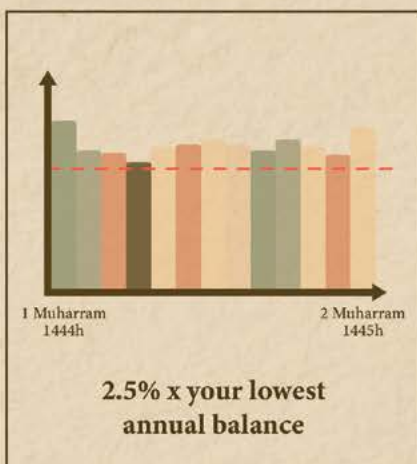
Ibnussabil

stranded travellers on a permissible journey

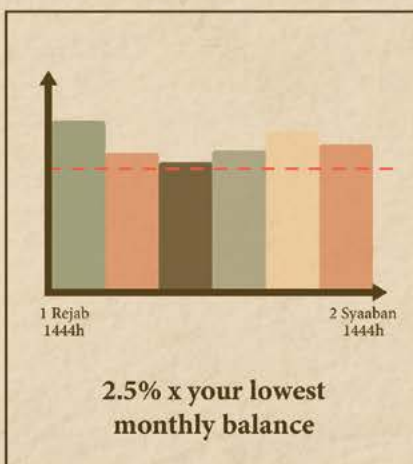
Zakat Calculation

Let's use an example for zakat on savings
(money that is kept in all types of savings accounts including fixed deposit and current account)
Any of the following methods may be used to calculate the quantum of zakat payable.

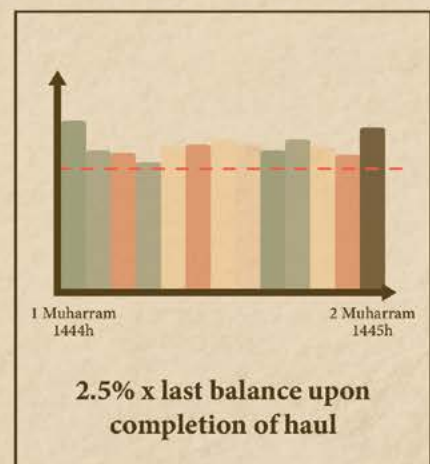
Method A



Method B



Method C



*The red dotted line on the graphs represent the nisab.

THE MUSLIM READER

Esoteric Aspects of Fasting



BY HYDER GULAM^[1]

*The famous Muslim mystic,
Imam Jelaluddin Rumi (1207 – 1273)
wrote in his poem about the joys of fasting:*

*There's hidden sweetness in the stomach's emptiness.
We are lutes, no more, no less.
If the sound-box is stuffed full of anything, no music.
If the brain and the belly are burning clean with fasting,
every moment a new song comes out of the fire.
The fog clears, and new energy makes you
run up the steps in front of you.
Be emptier and cry like reed instruments cry.
Emptier, write secrets with the reed pen.
When you're full of food and drink, an ugly metal
statue sits where your spirit should be.
When you fast, good habits gather like friends who want to help.^[2]*

Sawm or fasting is the fourth of the five pillars of Islam. Sawm means to abstain. It was prescribed upon Muslims in the month of Sha'ban^[3], around 18 months after hijra (emigration to Medina), and not ordained during the first years of Islam in Makkah.^[4] The month of Ramadan (the 9th month in the Islamic calendar) is the time designated for fasting

and Muslims fast every year during Ramadan. In a very literal sense, fasting is to refrain from eating, drinking or even from actions such as speaking. In Islam, it means to abstain (with the intention to fast) from eating, drinking and sexual gratification from dawn until sunset.^[5]

There are many good books and courses about the "rules"

and essential elements of fasting, and this article does not wish to replicate those rules. Instead, this article is about certain aspects of fasting generally that are beyond the cardinal rules, including the virtues of fasting generally, days recommended for fasting, the fast of the silence and i'tikaf (or spiritual retreat or seclusion).

The Virtues of Fasting

The tradition of fasting as a practice of spirituality and physical discipline is common to all religions and well established amongst Judaism and Christianity.^[6] Fasting not only helps the body to rest, but also protects against diseases. From a spiritual point of view, the benefits of fasting are numerous: to remember God, to ascend

to the level of the angels, to appreciate the worth of blessings, to control worldly desires and temptation, to teach contentment, to be trustworthy and to protect against sins. From a community stance, fasting ensues the unity and harmony of society, and also raises awareness of the plight of the poor and destitute.^[7]

The Bible mentions that Prophet Moses (pbuh) received the Law (or Torah) after fasting for 40 days. Similarly, Prophet Jesus (pbuh) fasted for 40 days in the wilderness, before being called to his ministry. Prophet David (pbuh) is said to have fasted every other day, a practice which is regarded as the most virtuous of the voluntary fasts in Islam.^[8]

As a basic primer, there are 2 types of fasting in Islam, the obligatory and the supererogatory, or voluntary.^[9]

Within these categories are the fast for the fulfilment of vows (*nadheer*) and the for the expiation of religious offences (*kaffara*).

There are many Hadith about the importance and virtues of fasting. The Prophet (pbuh) related from his Lord: Allah said, 'every action of the son of Adam is for his own benefit except fasting, for that is solely for Me. I give the reward for it'. The Prophet (pbuh) continued to speak, "**the fast is a shield. If**

one is fasting, he should not use foul language, raise his voice, or behave foolishly. If someone fights with him, he should say, 'I am fasting' twice. By the One in whose hand is the soul of Muhammad (pbuh), the breath of the one who is fasting is better in the sight of Allah on the Day of Resurrection than the smell of musk. The one who is fasting is happy at two times: when he breaks his fast and when he meets his Lord.^[10]

The Prophet (pbuh) said: **The fast and the Qur'ān are two intercessors for the servant of Allah on the Day of Resurrection.** The fast will say: 'O Lord, I prevented him from his food and desires during the

day. Let me intercede for him'. The Qur'ān will say: 'I prevented him from sleeping at night. Let me intercede for him'. And their intercession will be accepted.^[11]

In another narration the Prophet (pbuh) said: **"if a servant fasts on a day in the path of Allah, Allah removes the hellfire seventy years further away from his face"**^[12] Another Hadith states: There is a gate to paradise that is called al-Rayyan. On the Day of Resurrection it will say, 'Where are those who fasted? When the last [one] has passed through the gate, it will be locked'.^[13] Imam Ali (as) has also said: One of great aims of worships such as fasting is overcoming the arrogance.^[14]



[1] SQNLDR (ret) Hj Hyder Gulam FRCNA, FACN, former Honorary Solicitor – Australian National Imams Council, VP Australian Federation of Islamic Councils, President Islamic Council of Victoria, Registered Nurse, Mediator, Barrister and Solicitor, BA, BN, LLB, LLM (ANU), LLM (Melb), MBA, Master of Islamic Studies (CSU), DISP (IIUM)
[2] Accessed from <https://duckduckgo.com>

[3] The eight month in the Islamic calendar, which is based on the lunar cycle. It is some 9-11 days shorter than the Gregorian calendar, which is based generally on the solar cycle.

[4] Ali Budak (2006), A comprehensive guide: Fasting in Islam and the month of Ramadan, Tughra Books.

[5] Recep Dogan (2013), Five Pillars of Islam, FB Publishing/ISRA, p.331

[6] Budak (2006), p.5. It is also mentioned in the Mahabharat of Hinduism, observed amongst the Jains, the Celts, the indigenous North Americans, Babylonians etc. Yom Kippur is a fast observed on the tenth of Tishri, and known as the Day of Atonement, for the repentance for sins.

Recommended Days for Fasting

Fasting on the 13th, 14th and 15th

It is recommended to fast on Ayyam al-Beed (13th, 14th and 15th days of each lunar month, which corresponds to the full moon of thereabouts) based on the following Hadith:

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) ordered us to fast for three days of every month on Ayyam al-Beed, that is, on the days of the full moon (the 13th, 14th and 15th of the lunar month). And he said: 'It is like fasting the whole year.'^[15]

Fasting six days in Shawwal

It is recommended to fast six days after Ramadan in the month of Shawwal. Abū Ayyub reports:

The Prophet (pbuh) said, *'Whoever fasts during the month of Ramadan and then follows it with six days of Shawwal will be rewarded as if he had fasted the entire year.'*^[17]

Many scholars consider it to be *better to observe the voluntary fast on Monday and Thursday in Shawwal*, which combines the benefits a number of the deeds attained as mentioned above.

Fasting on Mondays and Fridays

It is recommended to fast on Mondays and Thursdays: The Prophet (pbuh) fasted on Mondays and Thursdays a lot. He was asked about this and he said, *'The actions are presented to Allah on every Monday and Thursday. Allah forgives every Muslim or every believer, except for those who are not speaking to each other. He says, 'Leave them.'*^[16]

Fasting on the day of Arafah

If one is not performing hajj it is recommended for him/her to fast on the day of Arafah (the day before 'Eid al-Adha) based on the following Hadith:

The Prophet said, *"Fasting on the day of Arafah is counted as compensation for the sins of past and following years"*^[18]

[7] Budak (2006).

[8] Ibid.

[9] Abul Husayn Ahmad Ibn Muhammad (2010), The Mukhtasar Al-Quduri: A Manual of Islamic Law According to the Hanafi School, Taha Publishers.

[10] Muslim, Nasai and Ahmad bin Hanbel.

[11] Ahmad bin Hanbel.

[12] Abu Dawud.

[13] Bukhari.

[14] Accessed from <https://en.shafaqna.com/4121/fasting-and-its-philosophy-in-imam-alis-words/> on 09 October 2022



Prohibited & Disliked Days for Fasting

Fasting on the First Day of 'Eid

It is prohibited to fast on the first day of 'Eid based on the following Hadith: *"The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) has forbidden fasting on these two days: 'Eid al-Fitr and 'Eid al-Adha".*^[19]

Fasting on the Days of Tashreeq

It is also *prohibited to fast on the days of tashreeq (the three days following the 'Eid al-Adha)* based on the following Hadith:

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) sent Abdullah ibn Khuzaa to announce at Mina, 'You don't fast these days. They are days of eating and drinking and remembering Allah'.^[20]

Fasting on Fridays only

It is disliked to fast just on Friday, but if one adds one day before or after it is permissible.

The Prophet (pbuh) said:

Do not exclusively choose the night of Friday as a special night for performing the night prayers. *Also, do not exclusively choose Friday as a day of fasting unless it occurs on a day that you regularly fast.*^[21]

In another Hadith the Prophet (pbuh) said, "Do not fast on Friday unless you fast together with the day before or the day after".^[22]

Fasting on Saturdays only

It is disliked to fast exclusively on Saturday based on the Hadith, as the Prophet said:

Do not fast on Saturdays unless it is an obligatory fast. You should not fast even if you do not find anything to eat save some grape peelings or a branch of a tree to chew on.^[23]

Fasting on consecutive days

It is disliked to fast consecutive days without eating at all:

The Prophet (pbuh) said: *'Do not fast consecutive days without eating at all.'* He repeated this three times and the people said to him, 'but you perform it, O Messenger of Allah'. He said, 'You are not like me in that matter. I spend the night in such a state that Allah feeds me and gives me drink... Devote yourselves to the deeds that you can perform'.^[24]



[15] Abu Dāwud and Ibn Majah.

[16] Abu Dāwud, Tirmidhi and Aḥmad.

[17] Muslim, Abu Dāwud, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah.

[18] Muslim.

[19] Imam Mālik and Abu Dāwud.

[20] Aḥmad bin Hanbel.

[21] Muslim.

[22] Bukhari and Muslim.

[23] Abu Dāwud, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah.

[24] Bukhari and Muslim.

[25] Faṭḥ Bāb al Inayah - Sharḥ al Nuqayah" of Mulla Ali al Qari.

[26] Qur'ān 21:52.

[27] Qur'ān 2:125.

[28] Bukhari, Abu Dāwud and Ibn Majah.

[29] Dogan (2013, ibid, p. 353).

[30] See <https://english.khamenei.ir/news/5715/122-religious-inquiries-on-Ramadan-and-fasting-answered-by-Imam> accessed 09 October 2022

Religious Retreat (I'tikaf)

The literal meaning of i'tikaf (religious retreat or seclusion) is *to seclude oneself for a period of time without being distracted by anything*. The definition of i'tikaf in Islamic terminology is a fasting person who has the intention of seclusion and devotion to worship in a masjid where the five daily prayers are performed in congregation.^[25]

The word is used in the Qur'ān: *"He (Abraham) said to his father and people: 'What are these images to which you pay such sincere devotion?'"*^[26] In this verse ya'kifuun means paying sincere devotion. In another verse:

Remember, again, that We made the House (the Ka'ba in Makka) a resort for people, and a refuge of safety (a sanctuary, that is, a sign of the truth). Stand in the Prayer in the Station of Abraham. And We imposed a duty on Abraham and Ishmael: 'Purify My House for those who go around it as a rite of worship, and those who abide in devotion, and those who bow and prostrate (in the Prayer).'^[27]

In this verse the word a'kifuun means those who abide in devotion of worship. I'tikaf is an emphasised Sunnah and is performed during the last ten days of Ramadan. The Prophet (pbuh) would perform i'tikaf

for ten days every Ramadan. In the year that he died, he performed it for twenty days.^[28] The Prophet's Companions and wives performed i'tikaf with him and continued to do so after his death.^[29]

The most rewarding i'tikaf is the one that is performed in Ka'ba, then in Masjid Nabawi and then Masjid Aqsa in Jerusalem.

There are three types of i'tikaf:

Wajib: this is when one makes a vow to Allah to perform i'tikaf.

Sunnah: this is performed during the last ten days of Ramadan.

Recommended: this is performing i'tikaf at any other time of the year as a recommended form of worship.

The different Muslim Schools, have great diversity in the particulars of i'tikaf, such as fasting, length of time in religious retreat i.e. less than one day or more, and what is and is not permissible, however while the specific rulings about i'tikaf are outside the scope of this paper, suffice to say there is great merit in spending time in a Mosque, in religious contemplation away from the distractions of life.



The Fast of Silence

Within the Quran there are a few ayaats that allude to the fast of silence. Not all scholars are in unanimity about this fast^[30]. However, it is important to note these as follows.

In Surah al-Imran (3:41), this ayat concerns the miraculous birth of Prophet John (pbuh), when his father and mother were old and barren:

قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً
قَالَ آيَتُكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ
ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ إِلَّا رَمْزًا ۖ وَذَكَرَ
رَبَّكَ كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحْ بِالْعَشِيِّ
وَالْإِبْكَرِ

The English translation is approximately: "Zachariah said, "My Lord! Grant me a sign." He said, "Your sign is that you will not be able to speak to people for three days except through gestures. Remember your Lord often and glorify Him morning and evening".

This same incident is also reflected in Surah Maryam (19:10). Also in this Surah is the incident after the birth of Prophet Jesus (pbuh), where Siti Maryam (pbuh) is told:

فَكُلْ وَاشْرَبْ وَقَرِّ عَيْنًا
فَإِمَّا تَرَيَنَّ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا
فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ
صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أَكَلِمَ الْيَوْمَ
إِنْسِيًّا

"So eat and drink, and put your heart at ease. But if you see any of the people, say, 'I have vowed silence to the Most Compassionate, so I am not talking to anyone today.'" (19:26).

The word used for vowed silence above is sawm, and Siti Maryam (pbuh) is commanded not to speak to anyone for that day, instead gestures to communicate when she is accused of being unchaste due to the miraculous birth of Prophet Jesus (pbuh).

In both these incidents, the temporary inability to speak are parallels and indicate a symbolic relationship between the two accounts. The command from Allah (swt) for both Zachariah and Siti Maryam (pbuh) to observe silence after these miraculous

events points to the spiritual significance of silence. Some commentators "have indicated that silence is the only true way to communicate or express an encounter with God's presence, as all words are inadequate in such cases. Outward silence, moreover, can be a manifestation of an inward suppression or emptying of the self in the Face of the Divine".^[31]

Within this general category of the fast of silence are the fast of the eyes, the fast of the ears and the fast of the tongue. These are some of the most important organs provided by God, and a means to communicate and supplicate. But within, is also a great capacity to cause harm to themselves and others. Restraining the eyes from the unlawful and forbidden, is a means to be closer to God. The same with the ears and the tongue, which must be restrained from listening to and uttering lies, backbiting and slander. The Prophet (pbuh) said: ""Fasting is a shield. So the fasting person should avoid obscene speech and should not behave foolishly and ignorantly, and if somebody fights with him or insults him, he should tell him twice, 'I am fasting.'"^[32]

[31] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Caner K. Dagali, Maria Massi Dakake and Joseph F.B. Lumbard (eds) 2015), The Study Quran: A new translation and commentary, Harper One, p. 767.

[32] Bukhari and Muslim

[33] Ali Budak, op cit, p.15.

[34] Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (1989), The 4 Pillar of Islam, Dawah Academy, p.171

Conclusion

Observing the fast is not only for spiritual, moral and physical benefit. For Muslims, in particular, it is in order to perform, perfect and willing obedience to God. The most sublime of worship, as Imam Ali (as) says, is one that is willingly done to seek God's pleasure alone.^[33] Fasting is one of the perceive acts of worship that helps to train the believer to achieve this aim of pleasing his Lord. Fasting is that temporary retreat and respite when humans can devote themselves to inner contentment and tranquillity, and serenity from sensual appetites.^[34]

About the Author

Hj Hyder Gulam was born in Singapore and educated in Melbourne. He is a registered nurse, a qualified lawyer, an accredited mediator as well as a Fellow of the Royal College of Nursing in Australia. He has post graduate qualifications in business/management, law, nursing and Islamic studies. He has published in areas such as trans-cultural nursing, Islamic law, health law, criminal law and military law.



Zakat Disbursement

MCAS held its annual Zakat Disbursement 2022 on 24 April 2022. The event was graced by Mr Zaqy Mohamad, Senior Minister of State for Manpower and Defence. Zakat was disbursed to the entitled beneficiaries, in hopes of celebrating the act of giving, especially in upcoming festivities.



Financial Aid for the Tonga Earthquake & Pakistan Floods

On 4 March 2022, a mock cheque was presented to aid the Tonga Volcano Eruption Disaster, where MCAS had contributed \$10,000. Presenting the mock cheque were RISEAP's Honorary Secretary-General, Dato Haji Mohd Marzuki Mohd Omar and Dato Hanifah Taib, Chairperson of RISEAP Women's Wing.

MCAS contributed \$20,000 to Mercy Relief for the Pakistan Floods Relief. A mock cheque was presented to Mercy Relief on 26 September 2022. Presenting the mock cheque was MCAS President, Bro Adam Foo and General Manager, Sis Norsiah Saad. The mock cheque was presented to Mercy Relief's the Chairman, Mr Satwat Singh; Board Director, Mr Vincent Ling and the Executive Director of Mercy Relief, Ms Angelina Ong.



Mock cheque
presentation for
Tonga Aid



President Adam Foo handing the
mock cheque to Mercy Relief for
Pakistan Flood Relief 2022

Ethico-Theological Foundations of a MUSLIM Community of Success



BY DR. MUSTAFA CERIC

This article is an extract from Dr Mustafa Cerić's speech, given at MUIS' International Conference on Communities of Success (ICCOS), September 2022. Dr Cerić was the former Grand Mufti of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This has been reprinted with the kind permission of the author.

Let me start my presentation with a quote from Imam Ali bin Talib, may Allah be please with him:

People are travellers, the world is a place to pass through, not to settle in. His mother's womb is start of his journey. The Hereafter is the end of his destination. His life is the length of the distance to cover. Years are his stations, months are his parasangs, days are his miles, and his breaths are his steps. He is made to travel like a ship with its passengers.

Notions about the ultimate genesis, the beginning of the cosmos (cosmogony), and visions of the ultimate eskhatos, the last day of the cosmos (eschatology), shape deeply moral and ethical orientations and behavior of man.

In all three Abrahamic religious traditions – Judaism, Christianity, and Islam – cosmogonic notions and eschatological visions make up the most important concept for normative relations between God and humans as well as non-human creatures.

Specific interconnections of cosmogony and eschatology may sustain different ethical orientations and reveal a mindset of a religious tradition and its theological articulations.

Indeed, the concept of religious cosmogonies and eschatologies may be a source for a moral and ethical orientation of today, which is characterized by a deep moral and ethical crises of humanity despite the power of the science of success.

By the term cosmogony is meant an account of how the universe (cosmos) came into being. It differs from cosmology, which is the science of the universe. Cosmology deals with the actual composition and governing laws of the universe as it now exists, whereas the cosmogony is concerned with the question as to how the universe first came to be.

This is something we know that we don't know.

We don't know how the universe first came to be.

All cosmogonic ideas are just theories mixed with mythologies and scientific assumptions against religious beliefs of creationism, a doctrine holding that matter, the various forms of life, and the world as a whole were created by Almighty God out of nothing.

We don't know how the universe first came to be because we were not

eyewitnesses when God created the universe. This is what the Almighty Allah, the Creator of the universe, nay the multiverse, rabbu-l-'ālamīn, is telling us as clearly

مَا أَشْهَدْتُهُمْ خَلْقَ
السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ، وَلَا
خَلْقَ أَنْفُسِهِمْ، وَمَا كُنْتُ
مُتَّخِذَ الْمُضِلِّينَ عَضُدًا

as it might be, in the Holy Qur'an:

Allah, praised be to Him, said: I never called them to witness the creation of the heavens and the earth or even their own creation, nor would I take the misguided as my assistants. (Qur'an, 18: 51).

There is a unanimous perception among the Muslim scholars that the multiverse was created by God, the Omnipotent.

Most Muslim scholars believe that the universe was created ex nihilo "from nothing" (lā min šay'). They say that the essence of God, the Creator, is separated from the creation by veils (ḥijāb) impregnated with the God's attributes.

Two parallel series of "first created things" are described.



On the one side, there are creations that can be considered archetypes, like the pen (al-qalam), the well-preserved tablet (al-lawḥ al-maḥfūz), the throne (al-'arsh), and the seat (al-kursī).

It is said, for example, that at the divine command the pen of light was dipped into the Letter nūn. God said:

Nuun! By the pen and what everyone writes

(Qur'an, 68:1).

The pen wrote with ink of light on the tablet of light all that was destined to happen until the resurrection, yawm al-qiyāmah.



On the other side, they say that the creation has begun with the elements: First was the water on which the divine throne rests. God said: It is God who created the heavens and the earth in six days – and His Throne had been upon water – that He might test you as to which of you is best in deed.

But if you say, *"Indeed, you are resurrected after death,"* those who disbelieve will surely say, *"This is not but obvious magic."* (Qur'an, 11:7).

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ
وَكَانَ عَرْشُهُ عَلَى الْمَاءِ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا، وَلَئِنْ
قُلْتُمْ إِنَّاكُم مَّبْعُوثُونَ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْمَوْتِ لَيَقُولَنَّ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ

All in all, the point here is to emphasize the acknowledgement of and belief in God's creation of the universe, which is a starting point of a moral and ethical worldview based on a conscientious dept (al-dīn) to the Creator in the sense of a voluntary – ṭaw'an not compulsory – karhan submission, indeed, in the sense of the awareness of being a Muslim – a peaceful man of submission to the spiritual laws of Malakūt, the world of spirits as well as of the cosmological laws of Nasūt, the world of physics.

Again, this is something we know that we don't know either.

We don't know when the cosmos, at least our small planet Earth, will come to an end.

Therefore, as in the case of man's failure to figure out with certainty how the universe begun because he was not an eyewitness to it, we are told that we should be aware that the date of the

end of the world is out of the reach of man's mind. Man is not in charge the laws of physics. He is not responsible for the function of natural laws. He is responsible only for his moral conduct – indeed for his decent relationship with human and non-human beings.

"Man has been called a rational being, but rationality is a matter of choice—and the alternative his nature offers him is: rational being or suicidal animal. Man has



to be man—by choice; he has to hold his life as a value—by choice; he has to learn to sustain it—by choice; he has to discover the values it requires and practice his virtues—by choice. A code of values accepted by choice is a code of morality.” (Ayn Rand, *The Objectivist Ethics*, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, 23).

Thus, man’s focus should be on harmonizing his relationship with God,

his Creator and Sustainer, with man his fellow brother in humanity and with the natural world his temporary abode. He should avoid being a cause for an ultimate disaster of existence of his as well as of the rest of God’s creatures. He should think about consequences of his moral and ethical behavior. A corruption (fasad) on Earth is always a result of filthy and sinful human hands.

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ
وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي
النَّاسِ لِيَذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي
عَمِلُوا، لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

Corruption has spread on land and sea as a result of what people’s hands have done, so that Allah may cause them to taste ‘the consequences of’ some of their deeds and perhaps they might return ‘to the Right Path.’
(Qur’an, 30:41).

Again, here comes the importance of the interconnections of cosmogony and eschatology in the sense of belief rather than knowledge.

Because we believe not only in what we know, but also, we believe in what we do not

know but have faith and trust in trustworthy reports about unknowledgeable things, which are metaphysical or transcendental truths revealed by Omniscient God to His chosen messengers.

This does not mean that we should disregard the results of the real scientific efforts of physicists and cosmologists who are making their reports about Big Bang and likewise theories in regard to the genesis of the universe.

Despite the fact that some of scientist have us believe that the universe came to be a mere chance of the play of blind cosmic forces rather than by a Wise, Ḥakīm, Creator, we should appreciate objective scientific research for truth.

But we should be careful about some nihilists who are telling us that this world has no purpose whatsoever

as well as about some apocalyptic minds who are predicting an immediate end of the world in their lifetime because they cannot afford to imagine that the world will continue after their inevitable departure.

It is our choice to believe in them or to have faith and trust in God Almighty who is teaching us through His messengers that **this world is not created in vain for a game but it is created for a serious aim and purpose.**



The aim is God's aim to reveal His glory to His creatures by His love and mercy and the purpose is to make of insān, man, an example of harmonious combination of an animal and rational being, to make of man the best of animal senses as well as the best of angelic spirit.

Indeed, by this very purpose of the creation of the world, God Almighty is telling us that insān, man, is His only creature who is made to encompass both abodes, the physical as an animal and the spiritual as an angel whereas neither an animal is made for a spiritual world nor an angel is created for a physical world.

Thus, because insān, man, is a unique creature, he is advised by his Creator how to survive physically and how to improve spiritually in order to achieve a success (najāḥ and falāḥ) in this world as well as how to win a salvation (najāt and falāḥ) in the Hereafter.

It is interesting to note that the Arabic colloquial term najāḥ, meaning success, is not used in the Qur'an at all.

Instead, the term falah is used in the Qur'an to designate not only the meaning of success in this world **but also the meaning of a salvation in the Hereafter.**

Thus, when we hear adhān, the call for the Muslim prayer, ḥayya ala'l falāḥ it is an invitation to both a success in this world and a salvation in the Hereafter:

– Come to success, come to salvation.

Besides, the reason why Arabic term falāḥ is used instead of the term najāḥ lies in the fact that the term **falah designates the sense of a permanent, continuous and thus eternal success and salvation**, while the term najāḥ indicates to a temporal or shortcut success usually in business and likewise.

This understanding of the falāḥ in the Qur'an leads us once again to the idea of an interconnectedness between cosmogony and eschatology in terms of a moral and ethical worldview.

If you believe that the universe was created by God Almighty from nothing, ex nihilo, then you believe that this universe has its Owner, Mālik or Malik who has certain rights of His ownership. Here lies the idea of dīn as a debt to the Creator, Khāliq, and the Owner, Mālik of the multiverse.

Hence, if you believe that the universe has its Khāliq, the Creator and Mālik, the Owner, then you will accept the dictate of Mālik's guidance.



However, man is a big puzzle.

To the dictate of faith, he responds with his “dictate” of prayer: God, forgive me! God, save me! God, don’t forget me!

When he is tested with affluence, he boasts that God loves him, *but when he is tested with poverty, he complains that God has abandoned him* (Qur’an, 89:15-16).

Whatever, man is ungrateful: when evil befalls him, he despairs, *and when good happens to him, he goes astray* (Qur’an, 70: 19-21).

When he is in trouble, he returns to faith with the dictate of prayer to God, *but when the trouble passes, he forgets the dictate of faith, which protects him from trouble.*

When he dictates a prayer, he expects an immediate

response, *but when he is reminded of the punishment for sin, he demands immediate forgiveness.*

Man is impatient when he begs for patience by saying: God, grant me patience, but immediately.

He is always in fear of fear and of hunger.

He likes to dictate his prayer to God, but *he does not like to listen to God’s dictates of faith.*

He is happy to hear that God loves him, but *he is not ready to submit himself to God except when he is in trouble.*

He likes to be seen as God’s khalifa, vicegerent on Earth, *but without a moral and ethical responsibility.*

He tends to judge God, *but he does not like to hear God’s judgment on him.*

He cannot live alone, *but it bothers him to share his life with others.*

But before he thinks of being khalifa, vicegerent man must understand that he is God’s debtor, al-madīn, confidant, al-waṣiyy, reliable agent, al-amīn that he is al-mu’min, trustworthy.

Man is God’s debtor because God gave him life.

God did not ask him anything in return except for being grateful in good faith/trust in Him as well as that he is committed to doing good deeds for his fellow human beings.

Man’s life is a gift from God, the Giver, to whom man, as the recipient of life, is obliged to be grateful.

The word dīn , which is commonly translated as faith or religion, literally means debt. The translation of the word “dīn” in the 30th verse of Surah al-Rūm in the Qur’an as “debt” and not as “faith” confirms the thesis about man as God’s debtor:

– Turn your face towards authentic debt. It is God’s natural way of creating people. There is no change in God’s creation. It’s an authentic debt, but most people don’t realize it.



The term yawm al-dīn in a figurative sense means judgment day, but in a literal sense it means “the day of debt” or “the due day”, **the day when man will return what was entrusted to him, which is his own life.**

In return, man is rewarded if he was aware of the value of his life and if he protected it from fasād, corruption; but man is punished if he was not aware of the value of his life and if he did not protect it from fahšā', immorality.

It is so simple that there is no need to explain it anymore, but there is a need to repeat it constantly because man is a being of forgetfulness, he is insān, nisyān or 'iṣyān.

God Almighty did not ask man how he have would wish to look like or what status he would have desired to have had on Earth. It was “God’s dictate” that man could not resist about his shape and status on Earth.

But God did ask man if he was ready to be a trustee on Earth, God asked him if he was capable of accepting al-amānah, the trust. Man was warned, however, that the heavens, the earth and the mountains rejected that offer.

Flattered by the idea of a khalīfa, God’s deputy on Earth, although he did not understand it well either, the man accepted the commissioner’s offer without thinking what it exactly meant to carry out the heaviest burden, which scared the heavens, the earth and the mountains. God said: – The man is indeed incorrect and hasty (Qur’an, 33:72).

Sure, if man is not willing or not capable to understand the fact that he is in dept (al-madīn) to his Creator during his first initiation, he will for sure understand it at the time of his second initiation.

النشأة الأولى والنشأة الآخرة

Here we call one of the greatest Muslim minds on morality and ethics Al-Rāghib Al-Iṣbahānī to guide us through the idea of the first and second initiation

of man and what it is in-between these tow destinations of man in terms of his success or failure measured by his moral and ethical performance.

In the introduction of his book: "The elaboration of two initiations and the achievement of two promises of happiness" (Kitāb tafṣīl al-nash'atayni wa taḥṣīl al-sa'adatayni), Al-Iṣbahānī observes some paradoxes in man's attitudes in-between this two ultimate destines of man:

Man does learn but his learning neither benefit him nor harm him;

Man comes to prayer but in laziness and he remembers God very little;

Man knows only phenomenon of this word but he is indifferent about the Hereafter;

Man prays but he is yet unmindful of his prayers;

Man writes books saying that it is from God in order to gain some cheap profits;

Man is aware of God but when he is reminded on God's presence, he does not mind;

Man debates by a wrong argument to kill with it the truth;

Man is calling but other than God Almighty;

Man believes but in Jibt and Taghut.

Man spends of his wealth for good but unwillingly;

Man does worship but besides One God those that do not benefit him nor harm him;

Man governs but in the way of ignorance;

Man is creative but in spreading gossip.



قال الله سبحانه وتعالى:
وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ النَّشْأَةَ الْأُولَى،
فَلَوْلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

*You have already experienced
the First Initiation, don't you
remember!
(Qur'an, 56:62).*

ثُمَّ اللَّهُ يُنْشِئُ النَّشْأَةَ
الْآخِرَةَ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

*Then, God will initiate the
Second Initiation because God
is Omnipotent to do anything
and everything.
(Qur'an, 29:20).*

In his book Al-Rāghib Al-Iṣbahānī explains that the destiny of insān, man, is to know his own nature as a prelude to know his initiator, God Almighty – indeed, to know his role in the universe, where he is designated as a khalīfa, vicegerent of God, because of his ability to know the difference between good and evil as well as the distinction between morally right and morally wrong.

It is this criterion by which the success or failure of a human individual as well as a human community is measured here and now in the immediate life of man, i.e., his ability to command good and prevent evil. Almighty God said in the Holy Qur'an: *You might have earned the title of the best community in human history provided that you are capable to command good (ma'rūf) and prevent evil (munkar) in the world (Qur'an, 3:110).*

In conclusion, we say that the way of man's belief that the universe is created by Almighty God as well as his belief that at the end the day he will have to account for his life before God Almighty determine his moral and ethical behavior for his success or failure here and now, al-dunyā, as well as for his salvation or loss there and then, al-ākhirah.

اللهم أصلح لنا ديننا الذي
هو عصمة أمرنا، وأصلح
لنا دُنيانا التي فيها
معاشنا، وأصلح لنا
آخرتنا التي إليها معادنا.
اللهم اجعل الحياة زيادةً
لنا من كل خير، واجعل
الموت راحةً لنا من كلِّ
شرٍّ، يا ربَّ العالمين

*– O Allah, set right for us our
religion, which is the safeguard
of our affairs, set right our world
in which our livelihood is, and
set right our hereafter, to which
is our return. Oh God, make life
an increase for us from every
good, and make death a relief
for us from every evil, O Lord of
the worlds.*



MCAS In-House Talks in 2022

1. Dar-al Arqam by Dr Daud Batchelor
2. Immortal Souls in Islam by Ustaz Khidir Ibrahim
3. Talks in Other Languages, 3 Myanmar talks by Dr Maulana Akbar Shah (Tun Aung)
4. Changes and Challenges by Ustazah Wan Nadia



MCAS Public Talks in 2022

1. Reason of Our Existence by Dr Daud Batchelor
2. Religion that Honours Women (collaboration with PPIS)
by Harvard Chaplain Samia Omar
3. Revisiting Ground Zero: Hate into Hope
by Harvard Chaplain Dr. Khalil Abdur-Rashid





PROJECT ANSAR High Tea

BY NUR SYAFIQAH
HAMZAH





Teambuilding exercise at the High Tea, facilitated by Brother Imran



MCAS President, Brother Adam Foo in his Welcome Speech

Project Ansar

Project Ansar held its inaugural High Tea, on a Sunday afternoon, for its 60 volunteers and staff at Grand Mercure Roxy Hotel. The event, held on 6 November 2022, followed the launch of the Project in Ramadhan during MCAS Official Iftar on 23 April 2022.

In the Welcome Address, MCAS President Brother Adam Foo highlighted the importance of Project Ansar in creating a safe avenue for the converts-to-be and the converts themselves to receive support and help in their journey towards Islam and especially as new

Muslims. He also reminded the volunteers of the heavy responsibility that they have as an Ansari, in receiving the new brothers and sisters in Islam. The Project aims to be implemented island-wide with clusters of the North, East, West and Central clusters of Singapore being formed, facilitating the connection between Ansaris and the converts who opt to embark on the pastoral care that Project Ansar will be offering.

The term "Ansari" comes from the Arabic word meaning supporter. Project Ansar was inspired by the people of Ansar, also called Ansaris, who



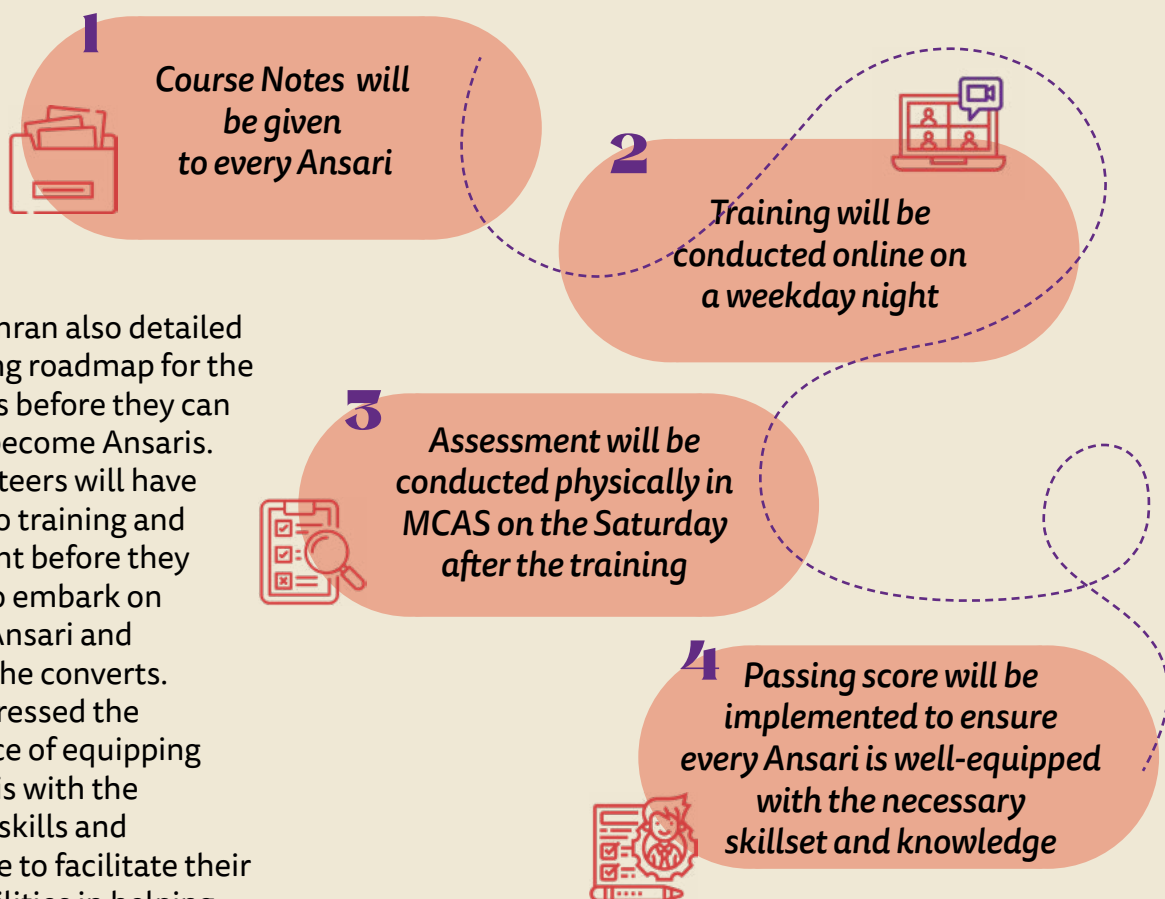
*Project Ansar Chairman,
Brother Imran Kuna*

helped Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the muhajirin (emigrants) in his hijra (migration) towards Medina. In the same light, Project Ansar aims to help the new Muslims on their journey in embracing Islam, accompanying them towards the path of Islam. It hopes to emulate the kindness and helpfulness of the people of Ansar back then, helping the converts and future converts alike in their journeys towards Allah s.w.t.

Project Ansar Chairman, Brother Imran Kuna, shared the Project's mission and vision. The Project hopes to develop leaders out of its Ansaris, where these individuals can lead in all Muslim converts' affairs. Project Ansar aims to instil confidence in their Ansaris in their religious and social values, to assist and guide converts to be becoming thriving, contributing members of our community.

Training Roadmap for Ansari volunteers

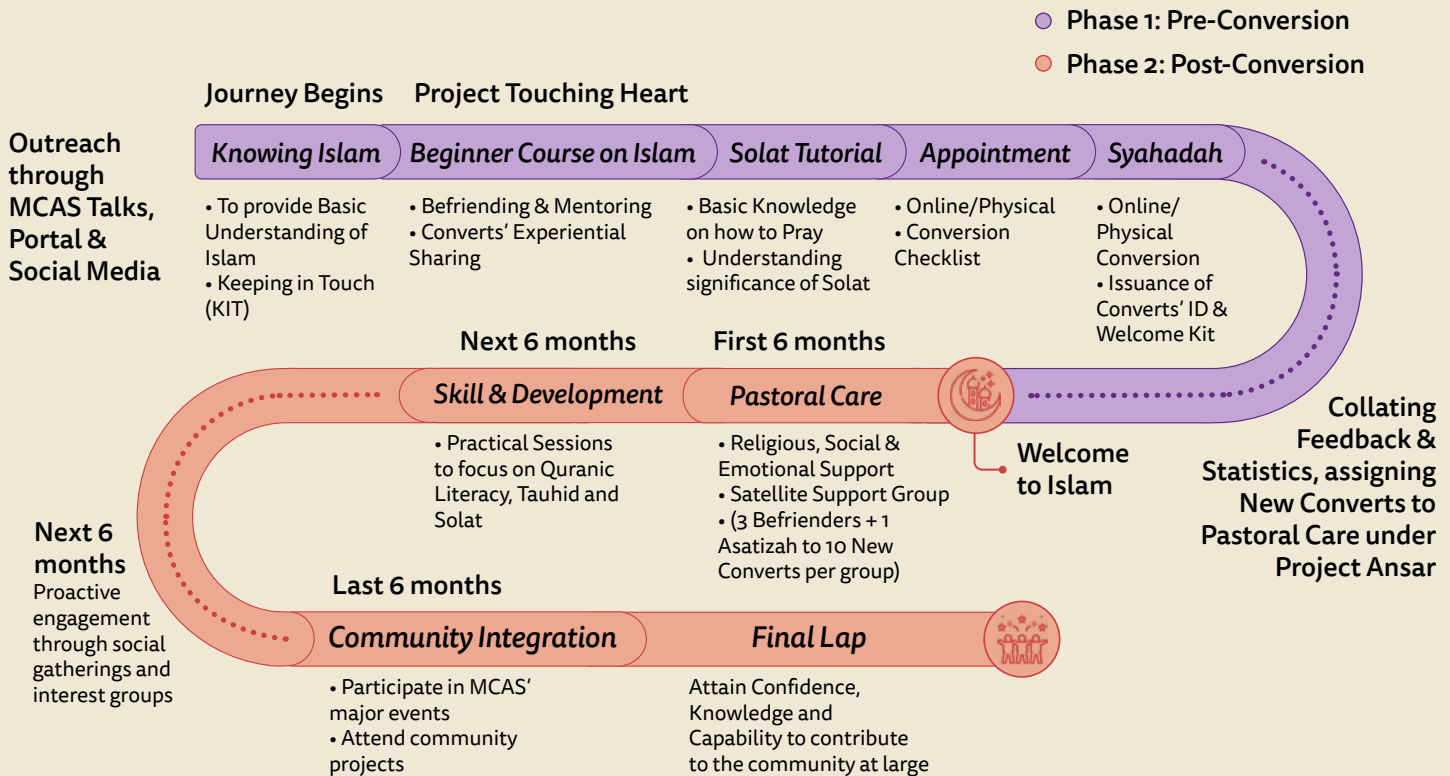
Training Method and Assessment



Brother Imran also detailed the training roadmap for the volunteers before they can officially become Ansaris. The volunteers will have to undergo training and assessment before they are able to embark on being an Ansari and assisting the converts. He also stressed the importance of equipping the Ansaris with the adequate skills and knowledge to facilitate their responsibilities in helping the converts.

Converts' Support Framework

A Converts' Journey through phases 1 and 2



The Chairman also shared on the two phases that the beneficiaries of Project Ansar will generally undergo: the pre-conversion phase and the post-conversion phase. New converts will be given the option to receive the pastoral care services under Project Ansar and thus commence their journey with the Ansaris. This programme will last for 2 years, with the first 6 months of conversion being the period that a new Muslim receive the pastoral care offered by Project Ansar. Afterwards, the convert will undergo classes and be invited to attend activities, social gatherings, and other interest groups in MCAS before

participating MCAS' major events and other community projects.

In the later part of the afternoon, the High Tea saw a teambuilding exercise, generating ideas from the clusters in order to kickstart the project. Some of the ideas shared during the group discussions include having social gatherings at halal food establishments and having Mosques Orientation for converts to familiarize themselves with performing acts of worship at the mosques.

The volunteers realized the importance of building

the initial connection and relationship with the pre-converts and converts, emphasizing much on gaining their trust and confidence in the programme. Brother Imran also stressed the importance of remaining open and accepting in dealing with these New Muslims, be it in their sharing or their questions posed to Ansaris.

Project Ansar is slated to begin in January 2023, having about 90 converts opt in for the pastoral care services. The Project aims to reach about 250 converts, with 10 to 15 clusters island-wide by 2024.

Qurban Drive

MCAS held its 6th annual Qurban Drive on 31 July 2022, with the event being graced by Assoc Prof Dr. Faisal Ibrahim, Minister of State, Ministry of Home Affairs & Ministry of National Development. 600 families received 2kg of qurban meat, delivered by the MCAS volunteer team consisting of 60 cars/vans drivers. The qurban meat was sponsored by Hezom International. In conjunction with the event, MCAS also launched Give2U.sg, a donation campaign which promotes Recurring Donations.



Project Ansar Presentation & High Tea

A high tea for Project Ansar volunteers, the Ansaris, was held on 6 November 2022 at Grand Mercure Roxy Hotel. Project Ansar is slated to begin in January 2023 and aims to reach about 250 converts island-wide 2024.



20 volunteers from Project Ansar attended a role play session on 18 December 2022, which marked the completion of the Project Ansar Training Programme.



Visitors to MCAS in 2022



Bro Adam Foo with Dr Mustafa Ceric, Harvard Chaplains
Dr. Khalil Abdur-Rashid and Ustazah Samia Omar



MCAS Council Member, Bro Mustafa
and Shaykh Ahmed El Azhary



Haji Sugimoto with Japanese converts and
MCAS staff at Asian Civilisation Museum



Haji Sugimoto and Bro Quadir, together
with MCAS Council members and staff

Meet MCAS' President ADAM FOO



BY NUR SYAFIQAH
HAMZAH

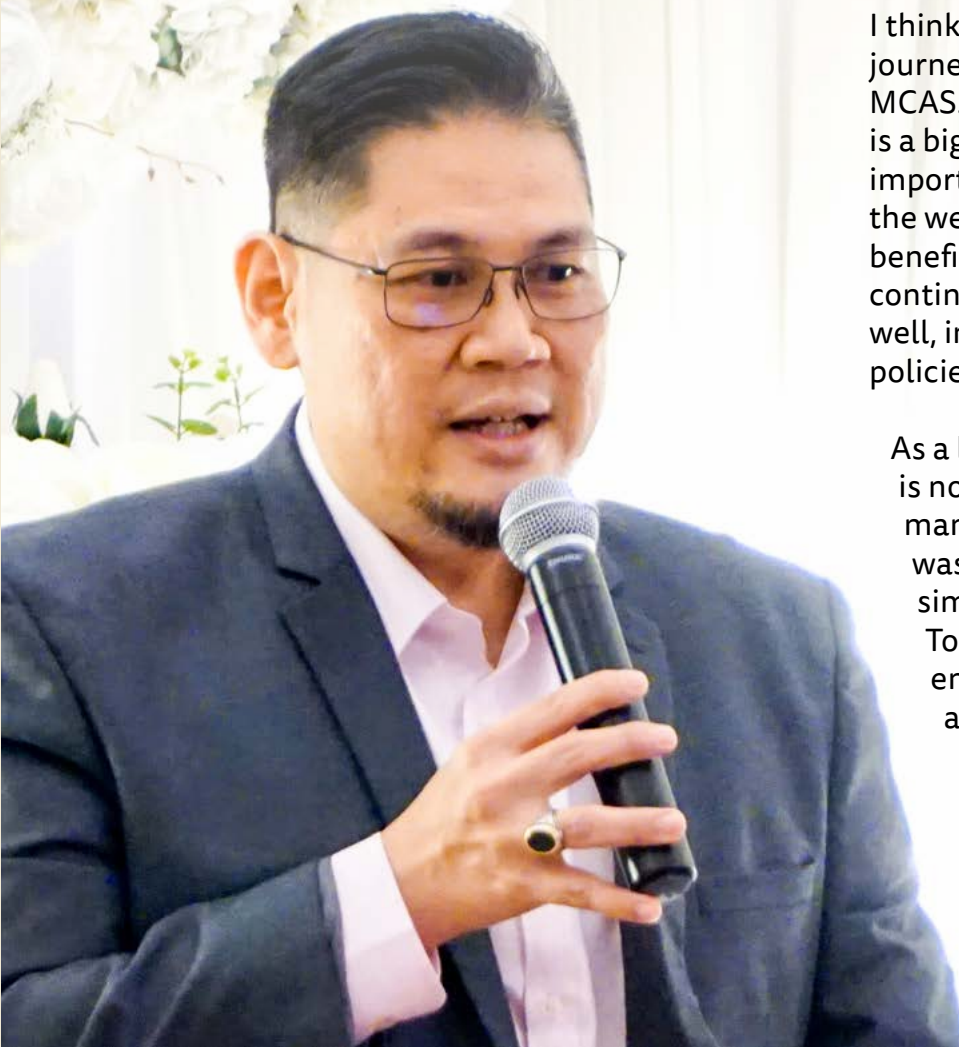
The Muslim Reader interviews MCAS' new President, Brother Adam Foo, on his experience leading the Association thus far. Meet MCAS' new President, Mr Adam Foo by Nur Syafiqah Hamzah

Briefly describe the past few months of being President of MCAS.

Adam: Firstly, I would like to thank all the past Presidents of MCAS, for their contributions to the Association. The first President, Brother Ridzuan Wu overcame challenges and struggles to form this association and the presidents who followed, Brother Faiz and Brother Imran (Immediate Past President) who had worked hard in ensuring that the organization ran smoothly and earn the prestige it has today.

I think it has been a continuous learning journey for me in being the President of MCAS. I feel that the role of President is a big shoe to fill. What is most important to me is taking good care of the welfare of our converts and other beneficiaries, and the organisation continues to grow and be managed well, in compliance with the established policies.

As a leader, I have realised that it is not an easy feat to balance and manage expectations. Back when I was a Deputy President, my role was simply to assist the then President. Today, I must lead in managing the entire Association. Nonetheless, I am grateful for always having the support of staff, members and volunteers of MCAS and also the guidance of the leaders before me. Alhamdulillah.



What is your leadership style and how do you think it will benefit the Association?

Adam: I think I am a people person who loves and enjoy working with people. Alhamdulillah. This is especially since after embracing Islam. Islam has taught me the importance of compassion and kindness. I think the ability to always be kind to others is a mark of successful leadership. Therefore, I always strive to listen to views, and to understand the differences and their merits. I always remind myself that when you show mercy to others, Allah will have mercy on you too, and in shaa Allah, He will bless all of us with a resolution to the obstacles we face.

I would say that my leadership style is consultative. I prefer to talk and engage with my team and staff and to gather perspectives from them. It is important that staff's views are respected. We also strive to give them tools to empower themselves to carry out their duties well, in serving the Association.

I believe that it is through having conversations on the ground, that I can better understand concerns and challenges and form a whole picture, which would help me in decision-makings that would serve the Association best.

What are some of the most important qualities to have in leading a place like Darul Arqam?

Adam: Sincerity. I think it is most important to be sincere and to constantly remind ourselves that we are doing what we do for the sake of Allah only. We must remember that the objective of the Association is to serve the needs of converts and thus must focus our resources in caring for them and their welfare.

Being a leader of such a unique organization such as MCAS also means that I must have an open mind and be accepting of different cultures, so that I can effectively help non-Muslims and converts to learn and know Islam, and to overcome challenges before and after embracing Islam.

This cannot be done alone. I believe that we must collaborate with other organizations as well and provide as much resources as

possible in helping non-Muslims and converts who are on their journey towards Islam. I also believe that there cannot be enough emphasis placed on the importance of staying united and working together, and to be good team players, so that we can serve our converts well and anyone else in need of our services.

Most importantly, I think being a good leader would entail being just and fair and leading with Islamic values. This is crucial when serving an Islamic organization like MCAS, as we must always return to a yearning for the guidance of Allah SWT. We must remember that we do not only lead and serve the community, but we are also accountable to Allah and the Islamic values that our cProphet (peace be upon him) has taught us to adhere to.

What are some of the foreseeable challenges you see yourself dealing with during your term and how do you intend to overcome them?

Adam: With the current climate of social issues that the Muslim community face today and with new norms and life-choices, I think it is important that we take on these issues with much sensitivity. We must take an even more collaborative approach and work closely with the larger Muslim community to properly understand the challenges of today. We must be sensitive to the needs of the community, and to strike a balance in being open and accepting as we guide as much people as we

can towards this beautiful religion.

We must remember that each and every person has an open invitation from God to learn, know and embrace Islam. We must give new Muslims from every walk of life, a sense of belonging to the larger Muslim community. We must also strive to be respectful in our conversations when conversing on these matters.

What do you wish to achieve through your involvement as the President?

Adam: As President of the Muslim Converts' Association of Singapore (MCAS), I deeply wish to give holistic support to the converts. We have a long way to go in achieving this. I hope to raise even more awareness about MCAS – that it is not simply a place for people to convert to Islam, but it is also the place that they can seek Islamic education, obtain social and emotional support and have a sense of belonging in community.

On that note, I would also like to share about Project Ansar. Alhamdulillah, we have

launched this project in Ramadhan this year (April 2022). The project aims to help converts on their journey towards Islam and accompany them on their journey. It aims to address their questions and to be their support system as they take steps into Islam. The whole process of support will be for two years where Ansaris (the volunteers for Project Ansar) will guide the converts and help them to address their concerns. The converts would also be invited to MCAS' activities and events so that they can connect with the rest of the converts and Muslim community.

What do you like to do outside of volunteering at Darul Arqam, especially in your free time?

Adam: (Laughs) Alhamdulillah, I am happy and love to volunteer in my free time. On weekends, I attend religious classes to deepen my knowledge on the religion. I also enjoy going to mosques especially Masjid Sultan however my heart is always with MCAS (Darul Arqam).

Other than that, I like to meet and catch up with friends. I also enjoy sharing about Islam to others, even to my non-Muslim friends. Since we are in relaxed chatting sessions, we all can learn something from each other in shaa Allah. I also enjoy cycling and workout with friends during my free time.

THE MUSLIM READER

A Critical Appraisal of INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE in Islam

**BY ISSA KHAN, MOHAMMAD ELIUS, MOHD ROSLAN
MOHD NOR, MOHD YAKUB ZULKIFLI BIN MOHD YUSOFF,
KAMARUZAMAN NOORDIN, AND FADILLAH MANSOR**

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The Prophet Muhammad's Dealings With the People of Other Religions

The life of Muhammad (pbuh) comprises numerous examples of dialogue and conversation between Muslims and non-Muslims^[1]. The Prophet (pbuh) spent his life in dialogue with believers, unbelievers, atheists, and idolaters. His life is a true example of dialogue for Muslims^[2].

In consonance with the verses of the Qur'an, the Prophet of Islam is reported to have said, *"All creatures of God are the members of the family of God, and he is the best loved of God who loves best His creatures"*^[3].

The Prophet loved all human beings equally. He did not like to curse even his enemies but sought for them the mercy of God. When the Prophet went to Ta'if to preach Islam, people persecuted him as he was preaching to them a new religion. Although the persecution was beyond the limit of his tolerance, he never desired their destruction but prayed to God for their forgiveness^[4]. The Prophet of Islam set an example of compassion, generosity, and excellent living.

Abū Hurairah narrated that the Prophet of Islam said, *"He who believes in Allah and the hereafter he must not be the cause of sufferings for his neighbour"*^[5]

There are many other traditions regarding the rights and dignity of neighbors irrespective of their religious affiliation. For example, *"He will not be a true believer, the Prophet repeated three times, from whose hand his neighbour is not safe"*^[6].

The Prophet also said, "Gibrael (Gabriel) used to advise me to treat my neighbor as though they are my heir"^[7].

A Muslim cannot be a true Muslim unless he considers his neighbor as himself and he cannot cause suffering to his neighbor in any circumstance. Islam includes everybody whether believers, unbelievers, atheists, idolaters, and so on, they will be included as neighbors in any Muslim society^[8].

Therefore, Muslims must observe good conduct toward others without considering

their religious affiliation. Jabir ibn Abdullah narrated another tradition:

Once we along with the Prophet were passing by a funeral procession of a Jew. When the Prophet saw this, he stood up, and we also stood up following him. Then we informed the Prophet that it was the dead body of a Jew. The Prophet responded that when you saw a funeral procession you would stand up.^[9]

According to another narration, "Once a funeral procession was passing by the Prophet of Islam (pbuh) and observing this he stood up. The Prophet was informed that the person was a Jew. Then he responded that he was a human being"^[10]. These two traditions clarify the attitude of the Prophet (pbuh) toward the people of other religions. His respect for a funeral of non-Muslims shows how Muslims should deal with non-Muslims. To do otherwise is contrary to Islam and the Prophet (pbuh).

The Prophet praised good people and their deeds regardless of their religion. In the fifth year of the Prophethood, Muhammad

[1] Haq, 2014

[2] Kurucan & Erol, 2012, p. 70

[3] Elius et al., 2019a

[4] Galush, 2003, p. 500

[5] [6] [7] Al-Bukhari in Mawsu'ah al-Hadith al-Sharif al-Kutub al-Sittah, 2008, p. 6018, 6016, 6014

[8] Ibn Hamid, 2013

[9] [10] Al-Bukhari in Mawsu'ah al-Hadith al-Sharif al-

Kutub al-Sittah, 2008, p. 102

[11] Ibn Kathir, 1998, p. 85

[12] Al-Mubarakpuri, 2006, pp. 73-77

[13] Al-Qurtubi, 1964, p. 50 [1] Haq, 2014

(pbuh) ordered his companions to migrate to Abyssinia (Ethiopia) and informed them that there was a Christian king (Najashi) who was a fair ruler. Praising his rule, the Prophet said that he was not unjust to his subjects^[11]. The Prophet also took shelter of non-Muslims. For instance, after the tremendous oppression by the people of Ta'if, the Prophet returned to Mecca under the protection of al-Mut'im, a non-Muslim^[12]. This indicates that the Prophet not only showed equal treatment to non-Muslims but also trusted them.

The Prophet guaranteed teaching religious education for non-Muslims. He visited Bayt al-Midras, the religious schools of the Jews, many times during his lifetime. Abu Bakar, the first caliph of Islam, also visited the same Bayt al-Midras several times and ensured freedom of their religious education^[13]. The Prophet warned against those who treat a non-Muslim living in an Islamic state unfairly. According to a reliable tradition, the Prophet said,

"He who is unjust to a dhimmi or belittle him or impose anything upon him beyond his ability or take some- thing from him without his permission I will be the witness against him in the Day of Judgment"^[14].

In line with this, El-Wakil (2019) described the prophetic tradition

"whoever harms a dhimmi I shall be his foe on the Day of Judgment"

is authentic and can be considered as an end clause to covenants that the prophet (phub) delivered to Christian, Jewish, and Magian communities.

According to Donner (2012), early in his stay in Madinah, the Prophet (pbuh) signed an agreement with various clans of Madinah including Jewish, polytheistic and ethnic groups (p. 65). The agreement guaranteed all of them to be considered as members of a single nation (Ummah). This agreement is called

The Charter of Madinah^[15].

For maintaining a peaceful co-existence between the groups, there was a common legal, economic, military, and political goal in this charter^[16].

The charter aimed to protect the lives and properties of its inhabitants in Madinah, fight against hostilities and injustice irrespective of religious or tribal affiliation and ensure religious freedom. Muslims and Jews lived side by side in harmony^[17]. Husain (2010) elucidates that the Charter of Madinah is the first written and

modern constitution in history. He says that the charter made the "formation of a pluralistic and tolerant polity in Madinah which can be regarded as the 'contemporary parlance of good governance.'"

The Prophet made many more Covenants with the inhabitants of Madinah. His accord with the Christians of Najran is another example of religious freedom and interreligious harmony. The Prophet allowed the Christians to pray in his mosque^[18]. According to this agreement, complete protection of Christians, their wealth, nationality, and religion will be ensured. In addition, their churches and priests will be protected. No priest will lose his post, and nobody will be refused to travel. Their churches will not be turned into a mosque. They will enjoy total freedom in practicing their religion. No taxes will be levied on them, and nothing will be imposed beyond their means. No Christians will be forced to convert to Islam. Muslims' treatment with Christians will be with compassion and cooperation. If Christians need any support for repairing churches or other religious and worldly need, Muslim must help them unconditionally. This agreement had been maintained throughout the

[14] Abu Dawud, n.d., p. 170

[15] Haque, 2010

[16] Kurucan & Erol, 2012, p. 74

[17] Abu-Munshar, 2007, p. 41

[18] Kurucan & Erol, 2012, p. 79

[19] Yaqub, n.d., pp. 84-87

[20] Karim & Saile, 2009

[21] [22] Kurucan & Erol, 2012, p. 80

[23] Sanni, 2015

[24] Abū-Munshar, 2007, p. 45

[25] El-Wakil, 2016

[26] Kurucan & Erol, 2012, p. 85



Prophetic and Khilafat periods from Abu Bakar to Ali ^[19].

Islamic history proves that interreligious dialogue started through this agreement between Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the delegation of Najran Christians in the first century of the Hijrah ^[20].

The agreement with Ibn Harith ibn Ka'b and his people is another example. It says that they will enjoy freedom in their religious affairs. Their

lives, properties, and places of worship will remain protected by God, His Prophet, and the believers. None will be compelled to accept Islam. If anyone is subject to any injustice, Muslims will come to help ^[21].

There were also agreements with the people of Yemen and Bahrain of the same kind, ensuring the freedom of their religion and protecting their religious institutions and priests ^[22].

In his book review on John Andrew Morrow's *The Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad With the Christians of the World*, Sanni mentioned that the Prophet's accords with the priests of Mount Sinai, the Assyrian Christians, the Persian Christians, the Armenian Christians, and the Christians of the world provide testimony for his attitude and relationship toward Christians ^[23].

The Prophet made many other accords between Muslims and non-Muslims during the period of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). ***In every agreement, the Prophet guaranteed the security of lives, property, and the freedom of faith for non-Muslims.***

If we evaluate the letters sent by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to non-Muslim leaders, we see that he emphasizes importance of treating them as shared beliefs, rather than treating them as differences.

In his letter to Negus, King of Abyssinia, and Heraclius, King of Byzantium, the Prophet mentions the same Qur'anic verse:

O People of the Book! Come to common terms as between us and you: that we worship none but God; that we associate no partners with Him; and that none of us shall take others as lords besides God. If then they turn back, say ye: "bear witness that we are Muslims." ^[24]

Provided here are seven authentic Covenants that can be traced back to the prophet Muhammad (pbuh), even though earlier researchers raised many questions about authenticity of Covenants as apocryphal or pious forgeries. These are the covenants of the Prophet with

- (a) the Christians of Najran,
- (b) the Monks of Mount Sinai,
- (c) the Armenian Christians,
- (d) the one written on Monday 29 Rabi al-Thani 4 AH,
- (e) the 1538 reproduction with the Christians of the World, and
- (f) with the Jews of Khaybar and Maqna, and
- (g) with the Samaritans ^[25].

[27] Yaqub, n.d., p. 160

[28] Hamidullah, 1987, p. 428

[29] [30] Abu-Munshar, 2007, pp. 91–92, p. 79

[31] Al-Jawziyyah, 1997, p. 144

[32] Al-Baladhuri, 1987, p. 177

[33] Abu-Munshar, 2007, p. 156

[34] Kurucan & Erol, 2012, p. 89

[35] Haq, 2014

[36] [37] Kamali, 2009

[37] Yaqub, n.d.

[39] Abu-Munshar, 2007, p. 117

Muslim Ruler's Treatment of the People of Other Religions

There are many records that non-Muslims were well received with their cultural and religious identities and provided a secured life in many lands under the rule of the four rightly guided caliphs, the Umayyads, Abbasids, Seljuks, and Ottomans^[26]. Abu Yusuf narrates that during the period of Caliph Abu Bakar, Umar, Uthman, and Ali (r.a), there were many agreements between Muslims and non-Muslims which none of them were violated by any of the Caliphs. **Their churches, temples, and synagogues were protected, and they practiced their religions freely**^[27].

During the reign of Umar r.a., the second caliph, when Abu Ubaydah ibn al-Jarah r.a. was the governor of Damascus, there was an agreement among Jews, Christians, and Muslims that "their churches and synagogues would not be changed. No party will insult others and fight against one another. No party will harm one another. The violation of the agreement will be considered as punishable"^[28]. One example of granting religious freedom to non-Muslims is Umar r.a.'s treatment of Christians in Islamic Jerusalem. Umar r.a.

provided them safety and security of their lives, their possessions, their places of worship, and their religious symbols, and did not impose taxes beyond their means^[29]. The assurance given by Umar r.a. to those living in Aelia (Islamic Jerusalem) is a historic example of tolerance toward non-Muslims. El-Wakil (2016) stated that the covenants of Umar r.a. with the Christians of Jerusalem and the Christians of Mesopotamia and, Ali's covenant with the Armenian Christians have been proven authentically by the recent study. Umar r.a. was always strict on justice regardless of religious or cultural affiliation. For example, when the son of Amr ibn al-As r.a., governor of Egypt, hit a Coptic Christian saying that he was the son of a noble man, and it was reported to Umar r.a. and he called Amr ibn al-As r.a. and his son from Egypt and ordered the Coptic man to hit Muhammad, the son of Amr ibn al-As r.a., in return^[30]. Thus, the rule of Umar r.a. was a milestone of peace, security, and justice. One day Umar r.a. was passing by an old dhimmi who was begging from one door to another. Umar r.a. told him that we could not allow you to beg in your old age when we collected jizyah, from you in your youth. Then he ordered to provide

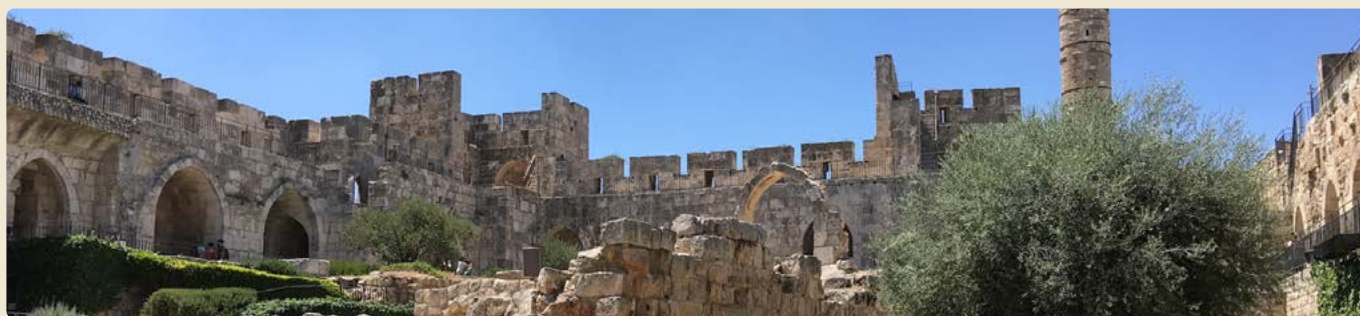


him with a pension from the state treasury and made it open for all those who were needy among dhimmis^[31].

Similarly, Umar r.a. was walking along the streets of Damascus and found a group of Christians suffering from leprosy. On seeing this, "Umar" ordered to give them donation from the treasury. He also ordered to provide them food on a daily basis^[32]. This represents Muslims' concern for all humanity, regardless of their beliefs.

When Salah al-Din conquered Islamic Jerusalem after 88 years of Crusader rule in 1187 CE, he followed Umar r.a.'s footsteps. He ordered the churches to be reopen after 3 days of closure and granted them freedom of worship^[33]. He made Islamic Jerusalem an open place for all Christians and allowed them to practice their rituals. Walid ibn Abd al-Malik, the Umayyad caliph, demolished a Christian church close to the Damascus mosque while he was expanding the mosque.

After the succession of Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz as caliph, the Christians complained about the incident. Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz demolished the extension of the mosque despite the local Muslims' protest^[34]. Thus, Muslim rulers' treatment shows that they maintained Islamic teachings of religious freedom and interreligious harmony throughout their rule. If a ruler violated interreligious harmony during his reign, the next ruler, in most cases, restored it.



Conclusion

The study reveals that having different religions is not unusual. Muslims are obliged to maintain unity in differences as well as accept the differences with sincerity, love, and cooperation for the satisfaction of God. Islam, as a universal religion, recognizes dialogue between religions^[35]. The Qur'anic approach and the Prophet's dealings as well as early Muslim rulers' treatment of non-Muslims, especially Umar r.a., prove that the people of other religions have received an equal opportunity as human beings. The dialogue between Muslims and non-Muslims is

held in high regard in Islam. Despite differences between Islam and other religions, Islam has not had problems adjusting to a society of diverse religions and culture. For instance, when the Christians of Najran came to the Prophet and engaged in a theological discussion about the nature of Christ, they did not agree on the doctrinal issues but agreed to a peace treaty between them^[36].

The treaty of Hudaibiyyah is the milestone of interreligious dialogue in Islam, which opened the gate for interaction and discussion between

Muslims and different groups of non-Muslims. Muslim rulers especially the four righteous caliphs made many agreements with non-Muslims and provided them with due rights including the protection of their churches, temples, and synagogues^[37]. The treatment of Umar r.a. for the people of other religions is a historical example of respect, tolerance, and interreligious harmony. Umar r.a. observed the principles of Islam in dealing with non-Muslims. His prescription for the people of other religions was always with justice and fairness^[38].

Haflah DACCnDays

MCAS held its annual Haflah & Graduation Ceremony for our DACCnDAYs students, on 13 November 2022 at the Auditorium. Attended by about 131 students, parents, teachers and staffs, the Ceremony was graced by the Vice-President of Education Division, Bro Haziq Harjit Singh.



Bursary Award Ceremony

MCAS Bursary Awards 2022 was held on 8 October 2022. This year's bursary saw 39 awardees, from over 40 applications. At the Welcome Address of the Ceremony, Vice-President of Finance Division, Brother Azmi Muslimin, spoke of the importance of keeping an open heart and mind in seeking the necessary life lessons and experiences to strive for improvement every day.



MCAS Bursary 2022 Recipients



Brother Azmi Muslimin giving the Welcome Speech



Recipients and family members registering for the Bursary Awards



Brother Haziq Harjit Singh (Chairman of the Bursary Sub-Committee) and recipients, during refreshments.

Women's Wing Walk 2022

MCAS' Women's Wing held its inaugural Women's Wing Walk on 27 November 2022 at East Coast Park. The women started from Marina Cove at East Coast Park, enjoying the morning sea breeze and cooling weather. The event was also attended by President of MCAS, Bro Adam Foo and Women's Wing chairperson, Sis Rohana Matmin.



**Meet MCAS'
Deputy
General
Manager**

**HANIM
YAHYA**

**BY NUR SYAFIQAH
HAMZAH**



The Muslim Reader interviewed MCAS' newly appointed Deputy General Manager, Sis Hanim Yahya. Sis Hanim shared about her 24 years of experience in MCAS and her favourite things about working in the Association, undertaking leadership roles as the Head of Finance and the DGM of MCAS.

How was your working experience in MCAS?

Hanim: One word to describe the experience working here – mashaAllah.

I had been appointed the Deputy General Manager of MCAS since April this year (2022), and since then I have undertaken a new slate of responsibilities and duties.

But, alhamdulillah for that as well as playing a dual role as the Head of Finance Division, where I had been the HOD since 2017.

I had been working in the Association since May 1998 so alhamdulillah, it has been a good 24 years of my life!

What were some of the challenges that you face with your new appointment? How did you overcome these challenges?

Hanim: For the most part, some of the challenges that I have faced of course included the added responsibilities and learning about the other divisions' programmes and activities, trying to familiarise myself with them.

For the past few months since my promotion, I have been exposed to Corporate Affairs work. I have also been attending trainings for charities' governance as well as learning more about corporate governance to help with my role as DGM.

Tell us more about your leadership style and how it would impact the Association under your leadership.

Hanim: One thing about me is that I do not like to be called 'Boss'. I think there is a difference between a boss and a leader, where I believe that my style is more to a coach who helps the team grow and develop together. I would like to think of my leadership role in the Association as an advisor to the staff, someone who they can approach for advice and guidance rather than someone who just instructs.

As a Coach, I also believe that I am able to motivate and give encouragement to the people I work with, holding their hands to create a work environment that the team

would want to work in. I believe I have somehow become a motherly figure to my team as well, as I nurture and coach them through progression.

I have always told my team that in this line of work, the true Boss is Allah. It is not me, or any other senior staff or leaders. Our Creator is our Boss, and it is to Allah that we are truly accountable to. Whatever we do, we answer to Allah. That is why I am reassured when I am not in office to supervise, because I know that Allah is watching, and I trust my team to carry out their duties efficiently and responsibly.

Name one strength and one weakness that you have and how having these would impact your job as a Deputy General Manager.

Hanim: One of my strengths is, alhamdulillah, my perseverance. I do not give up despite setbacks and I never quit. I am goal-oriented and focused on achieving my goals and I think everyone here knows this about me too (laughs)... that when I want something, I would do my best to get it. I would go above and beyond to complete my tasks and achieve what I want, insha'Allah. In a sense, I would say I am resilient as well. Working here for so long, I have faced many challenges and I believe my resilience in moving forward despite these setbacks, would help me greatly in my role.

Aside from that, I believe I am committed in my work, where I remind myself as well as my team to give our 150% in all that we do. It is important to exercise Amanah in carrying out our duties. By having perseverance and resilience, having these qualities would impact rather positively on my role as DGM.

I am also the type to focus on solutions. In fact, I prefer to be approached with solutions

rather than problems so we can work through the issues together. I think having this forward-thinking mindset is vital in carrying out my duties well, rather than resorting to blaming others when something does not go the way we intend it to be. It creates a united team that is capable of moving forward together and capable of managing problems and conflict.

As for weakness... Many would know this about me, too (laughs). I am impatient. I don't like to wait, and I am particular about deadlines. Whatever deadline that has been set, I would try my best to meet that deadline and I expect that from others too. I would even say I am the epitome of deadlines (laughs). So, for those who have worked with me, they would know this and might have experience this as well – I would keep chasing them to meet the deadlines. I think this is important, meeting deadlines and ensuring that things are being submitted on time. So that the Association can operate well and deliver its services in a timely manner.

What is your favourite thing about working in MCAS?

Hanim: MCAS has allowed me to be who I am, it is the place that groomed my leadership to where it is today. I am grateful that I am able to experience the da'wah of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) through our esteemed asatizah, and through our da'wah and education programmes.

I also feel that it is a blessing to work here, in

Darul Arqam. Darul Arqam is Arabic for 'House of Arqam'. You might recall that during the time of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), there had been an early convert named Aboo Abdullah Arqam bin Abi al-Arqam who had very generously used his house for others, including new converts, to learn about and embrace Islamic teachings, just like the Association today.

What do you like to do outside of work?

Hanim: In my free time, I enjoy spending time with my family and friends. I also enjoy travelling so now that a lot of border restrictions have been lifted, I have acquired a long list of travel destinations!

Occasionally, I will be attending dars, gaining knowledge as preparations for the Hereafter. I think it is important to take care of our spiritual needs as well, to be a more wholesome individual.

Who Is Allah?

Why do female Muslims wear the hijab?

Why do Muslims pray 5 times a day?



KNOWING ISLAM SESSION

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Everyone who wishes to know Islam at an introductory level is encouraged to attend this course. It serves as the basis to other courses at Muslim Converts' Association of Singapore (MCAS). It is open to public & requires no registration.

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(Walk-In and Online Class Available)

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10am - 12.30pm
(Walk-In Class Only)

For more information, visit <https://mcas.sg/KIS>

Teachers' Appreciation Dinner 2022

The Teachers' Appreciation Dinner 2022 was held at The Ballroom @ Katong, with 57 attendees, celebrating teachers and volunteers at Darul Arqam. The event was graced by MCAS President, Bro Adam Foo.



Major new Islamic Centre takes shape in BRISBANE

BY IMRAN ANDREW PRICE ^[1]



This article was originally published on Australian Muslim Times (AMUST), written by Imran Price. It is reprinted with the kind permission of AMUST.

An exciting new project, Brisbane Islamic Centre, the largest of its kind in Australia is starting to take shape in Brisbane. When completed, it will be the largest Mosque in Queensland and a most comprehensive Islamic Centre in Australia and a hub for all members of the community.

Brisbane Islamic Centre Ltd (BIC) was founded in 2007, primarily to establish and develop a major new Islamic Centre at 161 Underwood Road, Eight Mile Plains, on the Southside of Brisbane. It is a registered charity with the Australian Charity and Not-for-profits Commission.

The ten-acre block on which the Centre is being established is owned by BIC Ltd, and was donated Waqf to the community. The land is freehold and unencumbered financially.

The location of the Centre promises to be one of the more exciting developments on the Southside Brisbane Landscape.



The Centre that will be built on 5 acres of land and will include the following:

- Masjid with modern male and female facilities
- Underground parking for 300 cars and another 100 car parks at ground level
- Community Hall for weddings and functions for up to 800 guests; with its own commercial kitchen and a cold room.
- Several serviced offices for other organisations, with an adjoining shared Board room, reception and a kitchen
- Islamic Library
- Auditorium with a theatre seating for 150 people with state-of-the-art audiovisual facilities
- Islamic Museum documenting the history of Muslims in Australia and Queensland in particular
- Coffee shop
- Book shop
- Madressah classrooms
- Interfaith and cross-cultural dialogue facilities
- Youth facilities and children's playground
- Janazah and Gusal facilities

The Complex will consist of 3 levels:

- Underground car park, youth centre, sports facility, Madressah and a Janazah / Ghush facility

• Ground floor Masjid for men and an Information Centre (Dawah)

• Upper-level Masjid for ladies with direct easy access; serviced offices and the community hall.

The Community Hall will accommodate about 800 people for functions and will include a commercial kitchen.

The cost of construction is estimated to be \$20 million with over \$3m having already been raised.

The second stage being the other 5 acres of the development will be to build the first Muslim Retirement and Aged Care Village in Brisbane which will also incorporate a Medical Centre and a Child Care facility.

This centre, the Sukoon Village will consist of 91 x 2 and 3 bedroom apartments, 20 aged care units and 10 Dementia care units. The Development Application for Sukoon Village has just been granted by the Brisbane City Council.

Both, the Brisbane Lord Mayor, Adrian Schrinner and local Federal Member of Parliament, Graham Perrett have recently visited the site to see the progress of the construction and give the project their support.

A major fund raising dinner is planned for Saturday 15 October at Wilson's Steak & Seafood Restaurant in Eight Mile Plains and an open house family day event on the construction site itself is planned for December.

This Project will form an essential part of the community and fills the huge void currently experienced with the lack of suitable facilities. It will also facilitate a better understanding of Islam and Muslims in Australia for generations to come. More details are available at BIC website: www.bic.org.au, Facebook and Instagram pages.

Support for this important new project will be much appreciated with donations in cash or kind such as building material, labour, expertise and ideas.

Bank account details for BIC: Suncorp Bank, Brisbane Islamic Centre (Construction Fund) BSB 484 799, Account number 480 458 040.

Visitors are most welcome to the display centre and office at 161 Underwood Road, Eight Mile Plains. Please call 0402 898 741 to make an appointment.

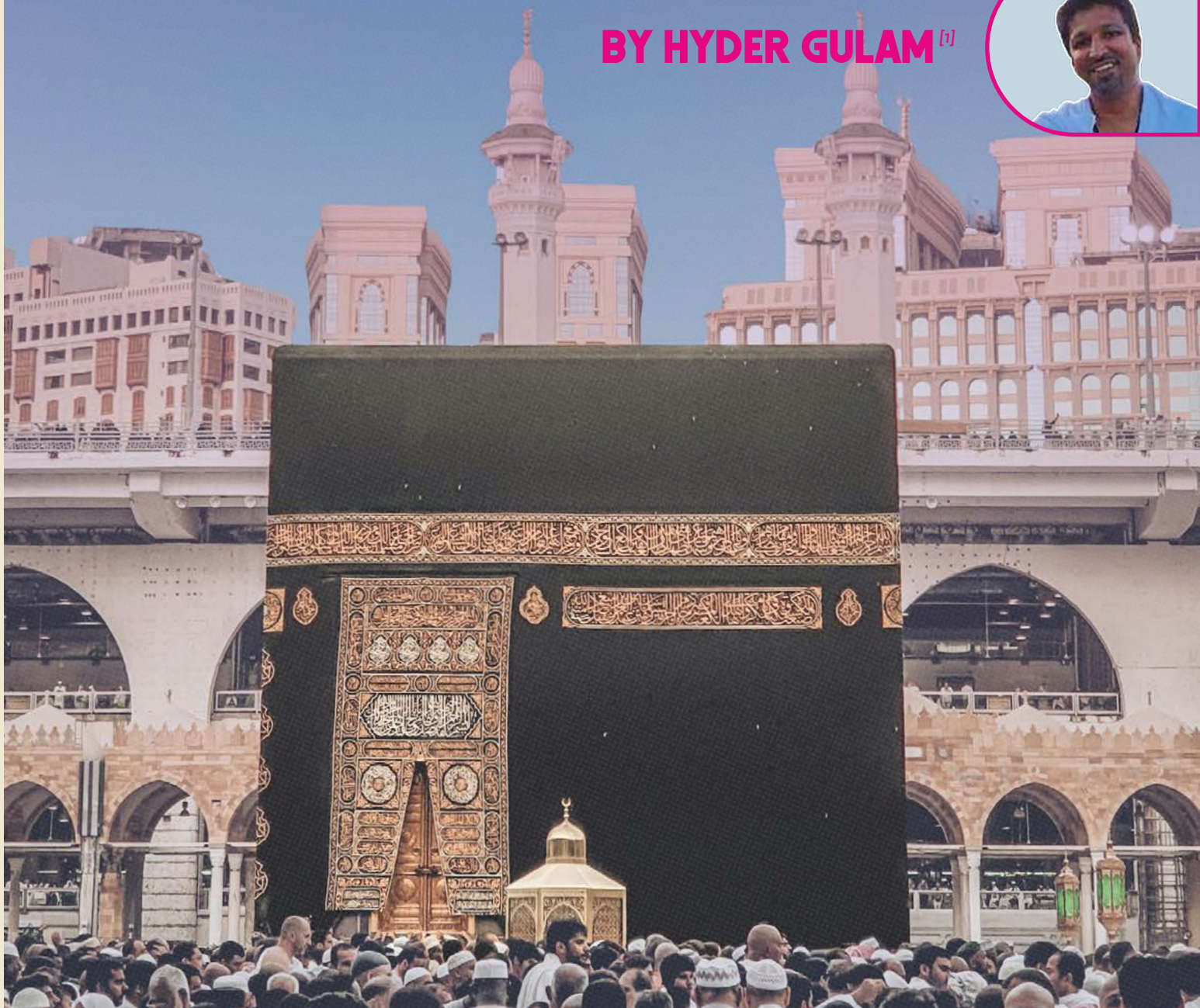
[1] Imran is a Training & Placement Officer at Epic Assist. He has an MBA from the AGSM (UNSW) and a Diploma in Islamic Studies from IIUM. He is President of the Brisbane Muslim Fellowship Inc., a convert support group set up at the Kuraby mosque in Brisbane. He was also the former Deputy President of MCAS.

THE MUSLIM READER

A Brief Primer on UMRAH

"Sins committed between two Umrahs are expiated and there is no reward for a pilgrimage without violations and full of good deeds except paradise."^[2]

BY HYDER GULAM^[1]



The Meaning of Umrah

The literal meaning of the word *Umrah* in Arabic is 'visiting', such as visiting the Holy Kaaba (the Sacred House of God, in Mecca). In Islam, Umrah is the minor pilgrimage and an adjunct to *Hajj*, which is the obligatory visit of a Muslim to the Kaaba, at a specific time in the Islamic year. Unlike *Hajj* (meaning 'intention to the Exalted One', which is within the first 10 days of the Islamic month of *Dhul Hijjah*), Umrah can be performed at any time of the year^[3], and shares some common rituals, although not as extensive as Hajj. The pilgrim has the intention of worship (*ibadah*) and performs certain rites and rituals during Umrah. The reason (*sabab*) for Umrah is to visit Allah's house as outlined in the Qur'an. In his lifetime, the Prophet (*pbuh*)

performed the pilgrimage as a model for worshippers to follow.

This primer is about Umrah. It will set out the rites and rituals of Umrah, as well as some tips for pilgrims wanting to undertake Umrah. The information contained here is current as of 9th October 2022, and discusses departure from Singapore. The dear reader should undertake their own research to verify the accuracy herein. This primer is intended for the traveller who prefers to travel with the freedom of self-booking. Of course, there are many very good Umrah packages that minimise the stress of doing it yourself. Also, there are many good courses and training classes that explain Umrah and the Hajj

rituals, such as those in MCAS/ Darul Arqam. The reader is encouraged to attend these when time permits, even if not traveling soon: you do not know when you are called. In Singapore, we are blessed to have many shops that sell items that are useful for Umrah around Arab Street and Geylang Serai. And of course, there is nothing like hearing the tales of those recently returned from Umrah: their stories, tips, and observations.

In a forthcoming sequel to this article, what to see and visit in Mecca as well as the benefits of visiting our beloved Prophet (*pbuh*) in Madinah will be explained. Readers will also be provided a list of recommended places to visit in both Mecca and Madinah.



[1] SQNLDR (ret) Hj Hyder Gulam FRCNA, FACN, former Honorary Solicitor – Australian National Imams Council, VP Australian Federation of Islamic Councils, President Islamic Council of Victoria, Registered Nurse,

Mediator, Barrister and Solicitor, BA, BN, LLB, LLM (ANU), LLM (Melb), MBA, Master of Islamic Studies (CSU), DISP (IIUM)

[2] Bukhari as cited in Mohammed Iqbal Abdullah (2018), The minor pilgrimage: 'Umrah – a practical guide, Singapore.

[3] Except in the 'disliked' period noted below.

Umrah

Umrah was prescribed in the sixth year after hijra (631CE) by the revelation of the following verse:

Complete the Hajj (the Major Pilgrimage) and the Umrah (the Minor Pilgrimage) for God, and if you are impeded (after you have already put on the Pilgrimage attire), then send (to Mecca) a sacrificial offering you can afford.^[4]

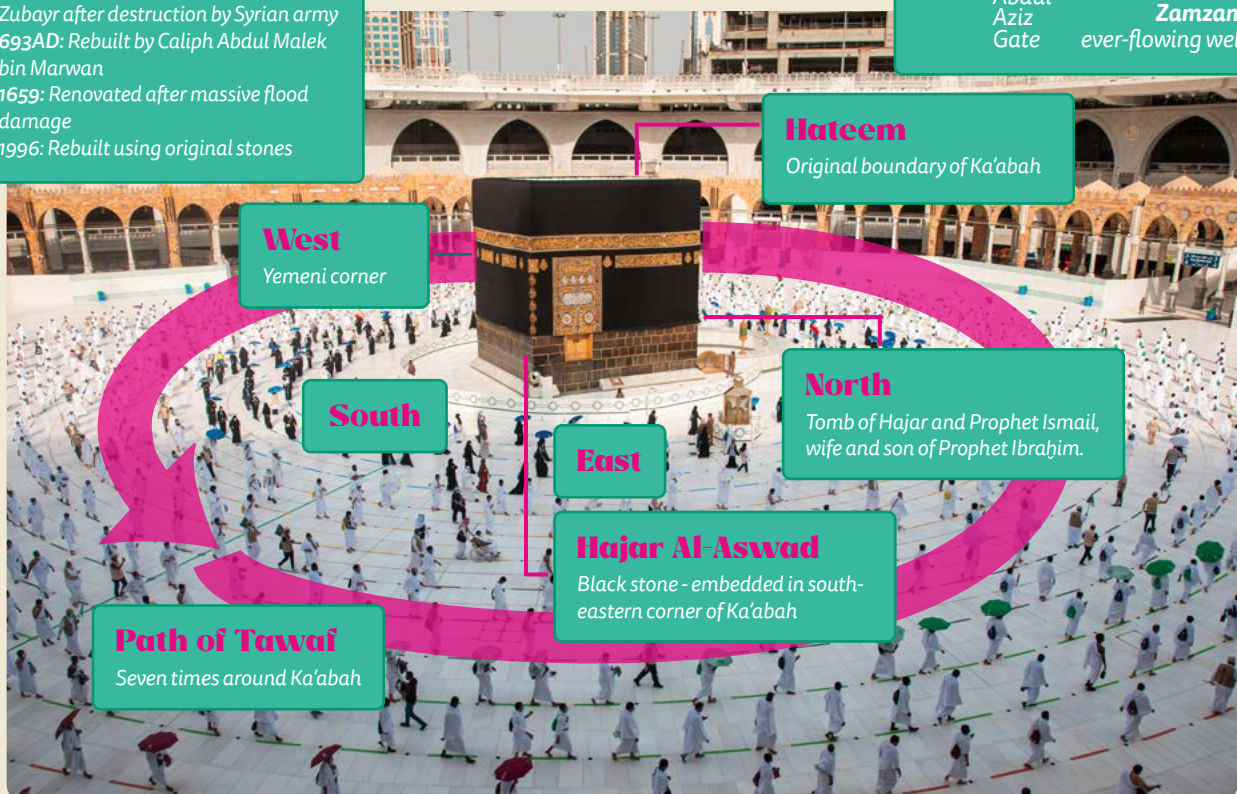
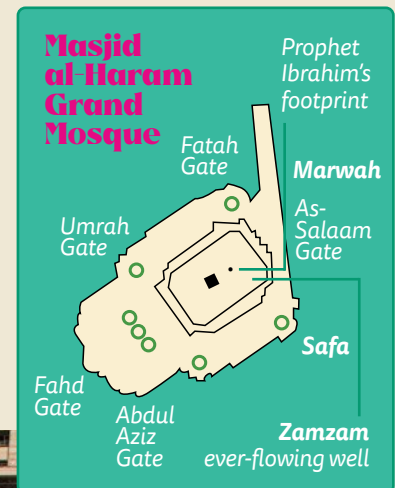
Ka'abah

Built by Prophets Ibrahim and Ismail
610AD: Rebuilt by Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) and Quraishi tribe
683AD: Reconstruction on original foundations by Caliph Abdullah ibn Az Zubayr after destruction by Syrian army
693AD: Rebuilt by Caliph Abdul Malek bin Marwan
1659: Renovated after massive flood damage
1996: Rebuilt using original stones

Another verse:

Behold, the first House (of Prayer) established for humankind is the one at Bakkah (Mecca), a blessed place and a (centre or focus of) guidance for all peoples. In it there are clear signs (demonstrating that it is a blessed sanctuary, chosen by God as the centre of guidance), and the Station of Abraham. Whoever enters it is in security (against attack and fear). Pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to God by all who can afford a way to it.^[5]

By participating in pilgrimage, Muslims are leaving behind their daily, material bonds and physically and spiritually returning to the epicentre of Islam.^[6] It is a "voyage inwards to oneself and a way of getting closer to God".^[7]



[4] Qur'an 2:196.

[5] Qur'an 3:96-97.

[6] Rageh Omaar (2020), The Islam Book, DK, p.52

[7] ibid

The Rulings of Umrah

Umrah is an emphasised *sunnah* for those who are able to perform it. Once, the Prophet (pbuh) was asked about whether Umrah is *wajib*. The Prophet (pbuh) said, 'no, but performing Umrah is better'.^[8] In another Hadith the Prophet (pbuh) said:

"Hajj is jihad (striving) and Umrah is tatawwu (optional worship)".^[9]

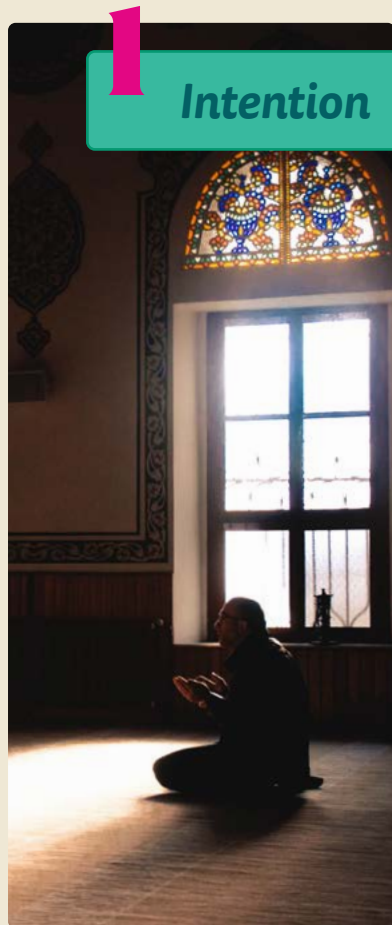
Unlike Hajj, Umrah can be performed at any time during the year, noting the disliked time below. There is no specified time for it. It is permissible to perform it just once in a lifetime or as often as every year. *Tawaf* is the pillar of Umrah and *ihram* is its condition. *Sa'y* (walking) between Safa and Marwa, and cutting the hair are *wajib* in the most of the Muslim Schools of Thought.

The integrals of Umrah must be performed in the order set out below to be valid.

It is disliked to make Umrah during the days of *tashreeq*; they are the day of Arafah and the four days of Eid al-Adha. A'isha (as) reports: "It is disliked to perform Umrah on five days; the day of Arafah and the four days of Eid al-Adha".

^[10] These days are allocated for Hajj and it is strongly disliked to do anything else in those days.

Rituals of Umrah



Intention

First things first, make your intention to perform Umrah for the sake of Allah alone. You can not only make your intention before leaving your home, but also many times during the journey, as it reminds you of your noble purpose. Making of intention is generally after most people have taken a bath and cleansed themselves in preparation of donning the *ihram*. Thereafter to make *Talbiya* is like the starter *takbir* of the prayer (*takbir tahrima*) for Hajj and Umrah. The recommended *talbiya* is the following statement: "*Labbayk Allahumma labbayk, labbayk la sharika laka labbayk, innal-hamda wanni'mata laka wal mulk, la sharika lak*".^[11]

The meaning is: "Here I am, O Allah, (in response to Your call), here I am. Here I am, You have no partner, here I am. Verily all praise, grace and sovereignty belong to You. You have no partner".

When a pilgrim finishes *talbiya*, it is recommended to supplicate to Allah, such as: "O Allah, I am asking your forgiveness, your pleasure in the hereafter and O Allah free me from the fire". It is *Sunnah* to make *dua* for the Prophet (pbuh) after *talbiya*. The prohibitions of *ihram* start when uttering *talbiya* (see below).

^[8] Tirmidhi narrates from Jabir ibn Abdullah.

^[9] Ibn Majah narrates from Talha ibn Abdullah, Ibn Abu Shayba narrates from Ibn Masud.

^[10] Aliy al-Qari, Fath Bāb al Inayah.

^[11] As narrated by all six hadith books.

Ihram

2



To put on ihram in advance of the designated sites where one is obliged to wear it before proceeding to the Kaaba. Ihram is a sacred state that a person enters to perform Hajj or Umrah. On putting on their white garments, pilgrims are considered to be in the state of sacred purity. They are then bound by the restrictions and rules that must be observed by them as long as they remain in the state of ihram. There are certain places called miqat which people cannot pass without putting on ihram

(discussed below), if intending pilgrimage. The Prophet (pbuh) said; "Do not pass miqat without wearing ihram".^[12]

Ibn Abbas sent a man back who passed miqat without ihram. He says, 'if a man passes miqat without ihram and goes to Mecca and fears for his safety, he should go back to miqat and put on ihram there. For this violation he has to sacrifice an animal as compensation'.^[13]

(Left) Portrait of the author as pilgrim wearing ihram.

3

Tawaf



Performing the tawaf, which consists of seven, anti-clockwise circuits around the Kaaba and each circuit is called a shawt. In the first three circuits of tawaf it is Sunnah for men to walk hastily (*ramal*), lifting their legs forcefully, keeping the chest pushed out and moving the shoulders simultaneously. The Prophet (pbuh) walked briskly at the first three circuits of his tawaf and walked normally for the rest of the four circuits in his tawaf.^[14] Ibn Abbas reports: "The Prophet (pbuh) walked hastily when he was making tawaf around the Kaaba to show his strength to the unbelievers of Mecca."^[15]

Idtiba is Sunnah for men when they make tawaf. *Idtiba* means passing the top sheet under

the right armpit and letting it hang from the left shoulder. *Idtiba* is not Sunnah in a tawaf without Sa'y following it and *idtiba* is prepared before tawaf not at the beginning of it. Ibn Abbas reports: The Prophet (pbuh) and his Companions declared their intention to perform Umrah from al-Ji'ranah by putting on their ihram. They left their right shoulders uncovered, bringing their ihram up from under their right armpits while covering the left shoulder.^[16]

The *hatim* or *hijr* Ismail in the shape of a crescent is part of the Kaaba and a pilgrim must walk around it (not inside it) when making tawaf. Passing through the *hatim* when making tawaf invalidates the tawaf.

[12] Ibn Abu Shayba and Tabarani.

[13] Ish'aaq ibn Rahuwayh, Musnad.

[14] Muslim.

[15] Muslim.

[16] Abu Dawud.

4

S'ay



Going between the hills of Safa and Marwa seven times, starting at Safa and ending at Marwa.^[17] Imam Malik and Shafi hold that this is a pillar of pilgrimage, because in the verse Allah says: “(The hills of) as-Safa and Marwa are among the emblems of God...”^[18] They hold that the word “emblem” in this verse indicates that it is stalwart. Also, the Prophet (pbuh) said: “Allah prescribed upon you going between Safa and Marwa, so you fulfil it”.^[19]

Prophet Abraham (pbuh) brought Hagar, his wife and their son, Prophet Ismail (pbuh), whom she was still nursing, and left them at the site of the House of Allah under a tree. Mecca, at that time, was a place where there was neither water nor any dweller. Abraham left a bag of dates and a container of water for them, and then he turned to go away. Ismail's mother said to him, ‘O Abraham! Where are you going? And who are you leaving us to in this valley without a companion

or anything?’ She repeated this several times, but he did not respond. At last, she asked him, ‘Has Allah commanded you to do so?’ He answered, ‘Yes’. Thereupon she said, ‘Then He will not let us perish’.^[20] After Abraham left, Hagar saw that Ismail was becoming weak and she feared for his life. She left Ismail and ran between the hills, Safa and Marwa, seven times, desperately looking for water. This act has become an obligatory ritual for pilgrims to remember Hagar's time of difficulty, and to honour her belief.

After tawaf, pilgrims proceed to Safa and climb it until they are able to see the Kaaba. At this time they salute the Kaaba, pronouncing the takbir and tahlil, and blessings upon the Prophet (pbuh). They then raise their hands and make supplications for their needs and also for all Muslims.^[21]

It is well known that the Prophet (pbuh) faced the

Kaaba, proclaimed Allah's Oneness three times, glorified Him, praised Him, and then said, ‘There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah. He has no partners. To Him belong the kingdom and all praise. He alone grants life and causes death; He has power over all things. There is no God but He. He has fulfilled His promise, given victory to His servant, and He alone defeated the confederates’. Then he walked towards Marwa and climbed it, until he could see the Kaaba. There he made supplications as he did at Safa.^[22]

It is sunnah for men to run between the two green lines (and lights) during sa'y and supplicate saying: ‘O my Lord, forgive me, be merciful to me, don't punish me for the sins you know, you are the most exalted and the most gracious’.^[23] The female pilgrims are not required to walk fast between these two points. They should walk at their normal pace.

[17] Masa is the distance between the two mountains of Safa and Marwa.
[18] Qur'an 2:158.

[19] Ibn Abu Shayba.
[20] Bukhari.
[21] Ibn Majah and Ishaq ibn Rahuwayh.

[22] Daraqutni and Nasai.
[23] Ibn Abu Shayba.

Cutting Hair

5



To shave or cut his/her hair after concluding the Umrah (at-Tahallul) and it should take place within the boundaries of the al-Haram of Mecca.

In other Hadith the Prophet (pbuh) said: 'May Allah have mercy on those who shave their heads' and he repeated this three times. The Companions asked, 'what about those who

cut their hair short, Messenger of Allah?' The Prophet (pbuh) replied, 'And those who cut their hair short'.^[24]

6. At this point the Umrah is complete, and the rules pertaining to ihram are lifted. Pilgrims heading to Madinah will normally perform a farewell tawaf before leaving Mecca.

The Sites of Ihram for Umrah (Mawaqit)

There are various sites on the outskirts of Mecca, which must not be passed without adopting ihram even if the person passing is not intending to perform Hajj or Umrah.

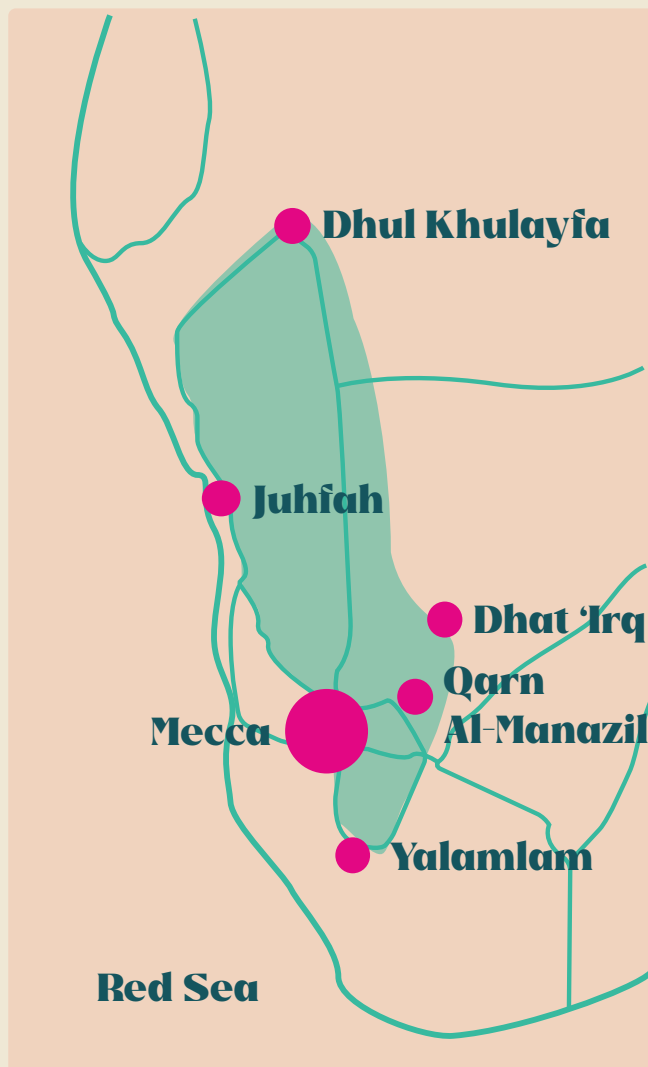
Dhul Khulayfa is the site for the residents of Medina and the people passing through Medina. People coming from Medina or from that direction must adopt ihram here before proceeding towards the Kaaba. This site is approximately 450km away from Mecca and it is the farthest miqat.

Dhāt 'Irq is the miqat (site) for the residents of Iraq or the people who come from that direction. This site is approximately 94km away from Mecca.

Juhfah is the site for the residents of Syria, Egypt and the people arriving from that direction. It is approximately 204km away from Mecca.

Qarn is the site for the residents of Najd and those entering Mecca from that direction. It is approximately 94km away from Mecca.

Yalamlam is the site for the residents of Yemen and countries like India, Pakistan and Malaysia and anyone arriving from that direction. It is approximately 54km away from Mecca.



It is permissible for those intending to perform Hajj or Umrah to adopt ihram before reaching these sites especially if they come by plane; they adopt ihram at the airport, or onboard when announced by the flight crew, normally 30 minutes or so before landing

in Jeddah. The Prophet (pbuh) said:

“Whoever adopts his ihram at Masjid al Aqsa with the intention of performing Hajj or Umrah has his past and future sins forgiven and paradise is destined for him”.^[25] It is haram

for anyone, whether he/she intends to enter Mecca with the intention of performing Hajj or Umrah, to pass mawaqit without adopting ihram. Ibn ‘Abbas reports: the Prophet (pbuh) said; “Do not pass the assigned places mawaqit without ihram”.^[26]

The Sunnah Practices Of Umrah

The Prophet (pbuh) said: “learn the Hajj rituals from me”.^[27] The foundation for the sunnah of Hajj/Umrah is the Prophet’s (pbuh) practices. The following are considered as sunnah when performing Umrah:



1. It is Sunnah to walk faster (*ramal* and *harwala*) between the two green lines/lights at Safa and Marwa, and also for the first three circuits of tawaf. As mentioned, another Sunnah is *idtiba* (leaving the right shoulder uncovered) for the first three circuits when performing tawaf.

2. It is recommended to cut the nails, trim the moustache, shave or cut the hair and pluck the armpit hair and to have intimate relationship with one’s wife before adopting ihram.^[28]



3. It is Sunnah to perform the major bath (ghusl) when one intends to adopt ihram even for women with menses or postnatal bleeding. A’isha (as) reports: “The Prophet (pbuh) had a major bath when he intended to go to Mecca for Hajj before adopting his ihram”.^[29]



The Prophet (pbuh) said: ‘Women with menses or postnatal bleeding must take a complete bath (ghusl) before declaring ihram. Then they perform all the rites of Hajj except tawaf around the Kaaba. They perform tawaf after they are in a state of purification.’^[30]

4. It is Sunnah to dress in two pieces of new and clean white cloth, known as *izar* (the top garment) and *rida* (the bottom garment), and then perform two rak’ah of prayer. The Prophet (pbuh) said:

“The best garments of yours are white ones”.^[31] **Ihram cloths are considered to be a shroud.**



Ibn Abbas reports: The Prophet (pbuh) and his Companions set off from Medina after the Prophet (pbuh) had combed and oiled his hair and put on two sheets of ihram (the upper body cover and the waist cover). The only type of cloth that he forbade people from wearing were those dyed with saffron as they may leave the scent of saffron on the skin. In the early

[24] Aliy al-Qari, Fath Bāb al Inayah.

[25] Ibn Majah, Abu Dawud and Ah̄mad.

[26] Ibn Abu Shayba.

[27] Ḥakim.

[28] Aliy al-Qari, Fath Bab al Inayah.

[29] Tabarani.

[30] Abu Dawud and Tirmidhi.

[31] Ibn Majah.

morning, the Prophet (pbuh) mounted his camel while in Dhul Khulayfa and journeyed until he reached Bayda, where he and his Companions recited talbiya.^[32]

Ibn Abbas reports:

"The Prophet (pbuh) offered two rak'ah at Dhul Khulayfa and uttered talbiya".^[33]

When adopting ihram, pilgrims offer two rak'ah of prayer. It is Sunnah to recite Surah Kafirun in the first rak'ah after Surah Fatiha, and recite Surah Ikhlas in the second rak'ah.^[34]



5. Applying perfume and oil before adopting ihram (it is prohibited to apply in the state of ihram) is Sunnah based on the following Hadith reported by A'isha (as):

It is as if I can still see the traces of perfume glittering on the Prophet's (pbuh) head while he was in the state of ihram.^[35]

Summary of Ihram Violations:



1 Ihram requires abstention from sensual indulgence, wicked conduct and disputing.



2 To kill or hunt land animals (or to aid in the hunt) is prohibited.



3 To perfume the body, dye the hair or rub oil into the body is prohibited.

4 To wash the head or beard with scented cleansing agents is prohibited.

5 To cut the fingernails or toenails is prohibited.

6 To cover one's head (for women, the face) is prohibited.

7 To shave the head or cut the beard or body hair is prohibited before ihram ends.

8 To wear something that is dyed and has a smell is prohibited. If the garment is dyed but has no smell it is permissible.^[36]

Summary of the Permissible Acts of Ihram:

1 To shower or use warm water for a bath.

2 To use an umbrella or rest in the shade.

3 To wear a belt (or something similar) for securing money.

4 To utter talbiya when praying, passing hills or valleys, seeing a mounted person and during night vigils.^[37]



[32] Bukhari.

[33] Abu Dawud.

[34] Abu Dawud.

[35] Bukhari and Muslim.

[36] Recep Dogan (2013), Five Pillars of Islam, FB Publishing/ISRA, p.331

[37] Ibid.

[38] Abu Dawud, Nasai, Ibn Hibban and Hakim.

[39] Ibn Majah.

[40] Bukhari and Ahmad.

[41] Abu Dawud.

[42] Muslim.

Greeting the Black Stone

No doubt, Covid-19 has changed the way we do things. What was once permissible, has not only been fettered by safety to self but to others. Before starting the tawaf, one is to face the black stone, greet it, and pronounce 'bismillahi Allahu Akbar' (in the name of Allah, Allah is great) during which his/her hands are raised. It used to be that pilgrims could touch the black stone and even kiss it, but this is no longer the case. If a pilgrim is unable to approach the black stone he/she shouldn't harm people whilst trying to approach it. He/she can greet it from a distance by facing it, raising the hands and pronouncing 'bismillahi Allahu Akbar', after that he/she kisses the palms. It is wajib not to disturb anyone.

Reciting the Qur'ān during tawaf is not obligatory. To prevent misunderstanding about this, the Prophet (pbuh) refrained from reciting it when he performed tawaf. It is disliked to shout or to increase the voice during tawaf.

The Prophet (pbuh) made the following dua between two corners (Ruqn-i Yemeni and Hajar al-Aswad); 'Our Lord bestows us favours here and, in the afterlife, and protect us from the fire'.^[38] The Prophet (pbuh) said: *Whoever makes tawaf without speaking any words except 'subhanallah, alhamdu lillah, wala ilaha illallah, wallahu akbar, wala hawla wala quvvata illa billah-il azim' his ten sins are forgiven, he is granted ten rewards and he is elevated ten degrees.*^[39]

It is recommended that in every circuit one should greet the black stone (if able) and touch the Yemeni corner, if possible. A pilgrim repeats the same for each circuit of tawaf – greeting the black stone and making dua, etc. The Prophet (pbuh) greeted the black stone using his staff from his camel during every circuit of his tawaf.^[40]

Greeting the Ruqn-i Yemeni is Sunnah, but it is not kissed. Ibn 'Umar says: "I never abandoned greeting these two corners: Ruqn Yamani and the black stone after I saw the Prophet (pbuh) greeting them."^[41] The other two corners, Ruqn Iraqi and Ruqn Shamiy, are not greeted. The Prophet (pbuh) never greeted them.^[42]

Tawaf

A pilgrim finishes the tawaf by greeting the black stone and then offering the tawaf prayer. The tawaf prayer is two rak'ah which are offered after every tawaf. The Prophet (pbuh) always performed two rak'ah after every tawaf.^[43]

The Prophet (pbuh) recited the verse: *...Stand in the Prayer (O believers, as you did in earlier times) in the Station of Abraham... [44] when he went to the station of Abraham. He offered two rak'ah and recited Fatiha, Kafirun and*

Ikhlās in these two rak'ah. He greeted the black stone again after finishing the prayer and then he walked to Safa.^[45]

The best place for performing the tawaf prayer is behind the station of Abraham, but if one cannot find a space there, he/she can offer the prayer from any part of the area that surrounds the Kaaba. The tawaf prayer can be offered at any time apart from those times when it is disliked to offer prayers, such as when the sun rises and sets.^[46]



Wikipedia Commons

[43] Bukhari.

[44] Qur'an 2:125.

[45] Muslim and Ahmad.

[46] Tahawi.



Zamzam

It is recommended to drink Zamzam's blessed water at every opportunity and to make dua whilst drinking it, for example: 'O Allah, I ask from You abundant provision, beneficial knowledge and a cure for all kinds of illnesses'. Many pilgrims also try to bring back export versions of Zamzam that is carefully sealed and packed. Women perform the same rituals as men during pilgrimage with some small differences.



The Rulings Regarding Women

Women still need to cover their head but they don't cover their face. Women do not utter talbiya loudly. Women do not shave their head, but it is obligatory for them to cut (some of) their hair. The Prophet (pbuh) said: "women do not shave their hair; they are supposed to cut their hair".^[47]

[47] Abu Dawud.

[48] Bukhari.

Women do not run between the two green lights/lines at Safa and Marwa, and they do not do ramal at tawaf. This avoids any part of their body being exposed while running. Women can wear stitched clothes. The state of menses (ḥayd) and postnatal bleeding does not prevent women from performing any rituals except tawaf. The Prophet (pbuh) told A'isha (as) to perform all the rituals of Hajj except tawaf.^[48]

Violations

There are two types of violation: 1) regarding ihram, and 2) regarding the sanctity of the Haram. If pilgrims commit any violation intentionally without any excuse they have to repent and compensate for their violation. If they commit a violation mistakenly, they compensate for their mistake but they don't repent, because there is no sin upon them for this type of violation. Violations have two requisite parts: 1) the sacrificing of an animal to atone for the violation, 2) the giving of sadaqa (charity).

The compensations are obligatory for pilgrims but they can fulfil them at any time. The elderly and those in the last days of their life should make compensation immediately. A person who does not compensate immediately should write a will for the compensation. If he/she dies without doing this he/she becomes a sinner. If he/she does not write a will, it is not obligatory upon his/her heirs to compensate for the violations. However, if he/she compensates for it without being obligated, it is valid.



Some Tips for the Pilgrim

Keep your Ihram attire, once you have completed your Umrah – you can get it washed in Zamzam and packed vacuum sealed, so that you when you die you can be buried in it.

Get a good belt to secure Ihram, that is well fitting. You can keep your valuables and room keys here.

While pilgrims (and travellers) on their journey can combine and shorten their prayers, many pilgrims will want to offer their full prayers at the allocated time at the Noble Sanctuaries. However, pilgrims can combine zuhr and asr, and magrib and isha prayers, with the requisite intention to combine and shorten the prayers.^[49]

Have small change to give the needy and the cleaners of Al Haram, as sadaqa.



You can book the Haramain High Speed Train between Jeddah, Mecca and Madinah. It is simple and easy to use, and much cheaper and environmentally friendlier than using a road vehicle.^[50]

Book your Saudi Tourist Visa early for Umrah – it is fast and efficient and you get a reply within 24 hours.^[51]

Alhamdulillah, there are many options for food delivery in KSA: one of the better is an app called HungerStation.

Careem is the online app for ride and car hailing services.

The dreaded post Umrah dry cough – my tips are to drink lots of water and to drink when crossing a threshold from an airconditioned to a non-airconditioned environment – and have lozenges on hand.

You can do your Sa'y on the 2nd and 3rd floor if open. It is less crowded, and you can enjoy walking with children.

Wear a mask, consider non-slip socks – especially if you are prone to foot diseases. The marble floor can be cold and very hard on feet.

Conclusion

To be called to Umrah is one of the joys of life. It is a spiritual, physical, and profound act of worship, only bettered by the Hajj in terms of pilgrimage. The late Dr Ali Shariati said that the performance of pilgrimage is a “simultaneous show of many things; it is a show ‘show of

creation’, a ‘show of history’, a ‘show of unity’, a ‘show of the Islamic ideology’ and show of the Umma”.^[52] Every Muslim is considered equal before God. There is no discrimination based on race, sex, or status.^[53] All are pilgrims and slaves before God.



[49] see Mohammed Iqbal Abdullah (2018), The minor pilgrimage: 'Umrah – a practical guide, Singapore p.8 for information. Imam Iqbal states that Taqdeem is brining forward the prayers, ie performing Asr at Zuhr time, Ta'kheer is to delay the prayer, that is pray Zuhr at the time for Asr, same re magrib and isha.

[50] Accessed at <https://sar.hhr.sa> on 9th October 2022.

[51] Accessed at <https://visa.visitsaudi.com> on 9th October 2022.

[52] Ali Shariati (1978) Hajj, Publications Bureau, Lagos-Nigeria, p.ix

[53] Ibid

THE MUSLIM READER

10 Duas & Prayers for Travelling

BY USTAZ FADHLULLAH DAUD ^[1]



Praise be to Allah. Some of us have already planned a short getaway to relax, with the ease of border restrictions after 2 years of adjusting to the pandemic. It is time to explore the beauty of this world and its people.

Islam views travelling as a good deed if one travels with the right intention. In fact, the travelling and exploration of the past Muslims were the key factors that allowed Islam to be embraced in all parts of the world today. Travelling also strengthens our belief in our Creator as Allah mentions in the Quran:

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ
فَظُنُّوا كَيْفَ بَدَأَ الْخَلْقَ
ثُمَّ اللَّهُ يُنشِئُ النَّشْأَةَ
الْآخِرَةَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Say (O Muhammad):
'Travel throughout the
land and see how He
originated the creation,
then Allah will
bring it into being one
more time. Surely Allah
is Most Capable of
everything.'
(Surah Al-Ankabut, 29:20)

For these reasons, travelling can also be an act of devotion to our Creator. Furthermore, other than continuing to observe our religious obligations such as prayers while travelling, as Muslims, we are also asked to portray exemplary etiquette (adab) when visiting other countries.

In this article, I list 10 prayers and Dua which we may be observed at different phases of our travel, based on the recommendations of our beloved Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. and our past scholars, insyaAllah.

Prayer before setting off

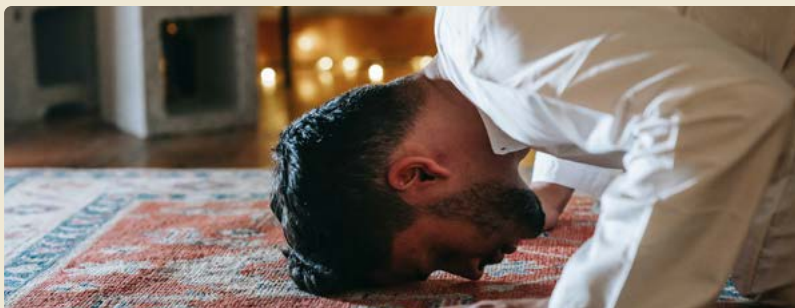
Two Raka'at of Sunnah Prayer

It is recommended to pray 2 raka'at of sunnah prayer, with the intention of travelling, before leaving the house.

Our Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. mentioned:

إِذَا خَرَجْتَ مِنْ مَنْزِلِكَ فَصَلِّ رَكْعَتَيْنِ تَمْنَعُكَ مَخْرَجَ الشُّوْءِ
وَإِذَا دَخَلْتَ إِلَى مَنْزِلِكَ فَصَلِّ رَكْعَتَيْنِ تَمْنَعُكَ مَدْخَلَ الشُّوْءِ

"When you leave your house, perform two raka'at and this will safeguard you against evil. When you enter your home, perform another two raka'at and this will safeguard you against evil."
(Musnad Al-Bazzar)



Imam An-Nawawi mentioned in his book 'Al-Majmu' that, in performing this prayer, it is recommended to recite Surah Al-Kafirun after the recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah in the first raka'at and to recite Surah Al-Ikhlâs after the recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah in the second raka'at, respectively.

Dua after leaving the house ²

Narrated by Anas bin Malik r.a, The Messenger of Allah s.a.w. said:



من قَالَ يَعبني إِذا خَرَجَ من بَيتِهِ: بِسْمِ اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ،
لا حَوْلَ ولا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ، يُقالُ لَهُ كُفيتَ، ووُقيتَ، وتنحى عنهُ الشَّيْطانُ

Bismillah, tawakkaltu 'alAllah, wa la hawla wa la quwwata illa billah
"Whoever says (upon leaving his house): "In the Name of Allah, I place my trust in Allah, there is no might or power except by Allah", 'it will be said to him: 'You have been sufficed and protected, and the devil will go far away from him'.
(Sunan At-Tirmizi)

Dua upon boarding a vehicle

It is recommended to make Dua upon boarding any vehicle as recommended by Our Prophet s.a.w. by saying:

سُبْحانَ الَّذي سَخَّرَ لَنا هذا،
وَمَا كُنَّا لَهُ مُقْرِنينَ، وإِنَّا إِلى رَبِّنا
لَمُنْقَلِبُونَ

"Subhanal-ladzi sakh-khara lana hadza wa ma kunna lahu muqrinin. Wa inna ila Rabbina lamun-qalibun."

In the name of Allah and all praise is for Allah. How perfect He is, the One Who has placed this (transport) at our service and we ourselves would not have been capable of that, and to our Lord is our final destiny.
(Sahih Muslim)



Dua for Travel 4

After your 2 raka'at Sunnah Prayer before setting off or at any point of the travel on your way to the destination, you may recite the following Dua:



اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْأَلُكَ فِي سَفَرِنَا هَذَا الْبِرَّ وَالتَّقْوَى، وَمِنْ الْعَمَلِ مَا تَرْضَى، اللَّهُمَّ هَوِّنْ عَلَيْنَا سَفَرَنَا هَذَا، وَاطْوِ عَنَّا بُعْدَهُ، اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ الصَّاحِبُ فِي السَّفَرِ، وَالْخَلِيفَةُ فِي الْأَهْلِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ وَعَثَاءِ السَّفَرِ، وَكَآبَةِ الْمَنْظَرِ، وَسُوءِ الْمُنْقَلَبِ فِي الْمَالِ وَالْأَهْلِ

Allahumma inna nas-aluka fi safarina haza-l-birra wat-taqwa, wa minal-'amali ma tardho. Allahumma hawwin 'alaina safarana haza, watwi 'anna bu'dahu, Allahumma antas-sohibu fis-safar wal-khalifatu fil-ahli. Allahumma inni a-'uzu bika min wa'atha-is-safar, wa kaabatil-manzar, wa su-il munqalabi fil-mali wal-ahli

O Allah, we ask You in our travel for righteousness, taqwa, and good deeds that You are pleased with. O Allah make our travel an ease, and shorten the distance for us. O Allah, You are our Companion in travel and the guardian of our family (in our absence). O Allah I seek refuge in You from the hardships of travel, a sight of grief, and from an unfortunate occurrence in wealth and family.
(Sahih Muslim)





Dua upon arriving at your destination

5

Narrated by Suhaib r.a., the Prophet s.a.w. would say upon looking at the town he wishes to enter:



اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّ السَّمَوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَمَا أَظْلَلْنَ، وَرَبَّ الْأَرْضِينَ السَّبْعِ وَمَا أَقْلَلْنَ، وَرَبَّ الشَّيَاطِينِ وَمَا أَضَلَّلْنَ، وَرَبَّ الرِّيَّاحِ وَمَا ذَرَيْنَ، أَسْأَلُكَ خَيْرَ هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ وَخَيْرَ أَهْلِهَا، وَخَيْرَ مَا فِيهَا، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّهَا وَشَرِّ أَهْلِهَا، وَشَرِّ مَا فِيهَا

"Allahumma rabbas samawatis sab'i wa ma azlalna, wa rabbal ardin as sab'i wa ma aqlalna, wa rabbash-shayatini wa ma adlalna, wa rabbar riyahi wa ma zaraina, as'aluka khaira hadzihil qaryati wa khaira ahliha, wa khaira ma fiha, wa a'udzubika min sharriha wa sharri ahliha, wa sharri ma fiha."

"O Allah, Lord of the seven heavens and all that they envelope, Lord of the seven earths and all that they carry, Lord of the devils and all whom they misguide, Lord of the winds and all whom they whisk away. I ask You for the goodness of this village, the goodness of its inhabitants and for all the goodness found within it and I take refuge with You from the evil of this village, the evil of its inhabitants and from all the evil found within it."

(Mustadrak Al-Hakim)

Dua upon entering your place of stay

6

We may not know who has previously stayed or what incidents have happened in the hotel room before that might affect our stay. It is indeed helpful to protect ourselves from any harm by reciting the following Dua as mentioned in a Hadith which was narrated by Khawlah binte Hakim As-Sulaimiyyah r.a. The Prophet s.a.w. said:

مَنْ نَزَلَ مَنْزِلًا ثُمَّ قَالَ "أَعُوذُ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ التَّامَّاتِ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ"
لَمْ يَضُرَّهُ شَيْءٌ حَتَّى يَرْتَحِلَ مِنْ مَنْزِلِهِ ذَلِكَ

A'uzu bikalimatillahit-tammati min syarri ma khalaq

Whoever enters at a place, and then prays:

*"I seek refuge in the Perfect Words of Allah from the evil of what is created,"
nothing would harm him until he makes his leave from that place.*

(Sahih Muslim)



7

Dua for witnessing a person who is experiencing an affliction or an illness

Sometimes in our travels, we may encounter different kinds of people such as those who are afflicted with illnesses or a disability. While it is praiseworthy to sympathise, support and make Dua for them, it is also recommended to recite the following Dua so as to protect ourselves from being afflicted with such trials. The Messenger of Allah s.a.w. said:

مَنْ رَأَى مُبْتَلًى فَقَالَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي عَافَانِي مِمَّا ابْتَلَاكَ بِهِ،
وَفَضَّلَنِي عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِمَّنْ خَلَقَ تَفْضِيلًا، لَمْ يُصِبْهُ ذَلِكَ الْبَلَاءُ

"Alhamdulillahil ladzi 'afani mimma-b-talaka bih, wa faddalani 'ala kathirin mimman khalaqa tafdila"

Whoever sees a person who is afflicted and says: "Praise be to Allah who had saved me from what He had afflicted you with, and for honouring me over many of his creations", he (or she) will never be afflicted by it.

(Sunan Ibn Majah)

8 Dua when experiencing difficulties during travel

There are also times when we face trials during travelling. The best of remembrance (Zikr) is to ask for forgiveness (Istighfar) from Allah s.w.t. for our sins or shortcomings.

Abdullah bin Abbas r.a. narrates that Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. stated:

مَنْ أَكْثَرَ مِنَ الْإِسْتِغْفَارِ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُ مِنْ كُلِّ
هَمٍّ فَرَجًا وَمِنْ كُلِّ ضِيقٍ مَخْرَجًا وَرَزَقَهُ مِنْ
حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ

*Whoever increases his prayers for forgiveness (i.e. Astaghfirullah), Allah will grant him relief from every worry, a way out from every hardship, and provide for him in ways he does not expect.
(Musnad Ahmad)*



Dua upon returning home

Upon returning home, it is recommended to make the Dua For Travel as mentioned above while additionally making the following Dua afterwards:

آيُونَ تَائِبُونَ عَابِدُونَ لِرَبِّنَا حَامِدُونَ

"Ayibun, ta'ibun, 'abidun, liRabbina hamidun"

*We return, in repentant, worshipping, and praising our Lord
(Sahih Muslim)*



10 Prayer upon returning home

While it is recommended to pray 2 raka'at of prayer before leaving the house at the start of our travels, it is also recommended to pray 2 raka'at of sunnah prayer after finally returning back home. This is based on the same Hadith mentioned above:

إِذَا خَرَجْتَ مِنْ مَنْزِلِكَ فَصَلِّ رَكْعَتَيْنِ تَمْنَعُكَ مَخْرَجَ الشُّوْءِ
وَإِذَا دَخَلْتَ إِلَى مَنْزِلِكَ فَصَلِّ رَكْعَتَيْنِ تَمْنَعُكَ مَدْخَلَ الشُّوْءِ

"When you leave your house, perform two raka'at and this will safeguard you against evil. When you enter your home, perform another two raka'at and this will safeguard you against evil."

(Musnad Al-Bazzar)

It is important that we spend much of our time travelling by making sincere and heartfelt Dua. This is recommended by our Prophet s.a.w. as he mentions the merit of a traveller making Dua:

ثَلَاثُ دَعَوَاتٍ
مُسْتَجَابَاتٌ لَا شَكَّ
فِيهِنَّ؛ دَعْوَةُ الْمَظْلُومِ،
وَدَعْوَةُ الْمَسَافِرِ،
وَدَعْوَةُ الْوَالِدِ عَلَى وَلَدِهِ

"Three supplications are answered without a doubt: The supplication of the oppressed, the supplication of the traveller, and the supplication of the parent for his child."
(Sunan At-Tirmizi)

I hope that these short Dua and recommended prayers can benefit us throughout our travels and serve as a reminder to show gratitude towards Allah for granting us the opportunity to travel and witness His wonders in creation.

With this gratitude, we pray that Allah increases our wealth and provisions in abundance and grant us the opportunity to see and appreciate His wonders again in the future, insyaAllah.

May Allah accept all our efforts and worship in fulfilling our duties as His righteous servants, amin.
And Allah knows best.

The article is reprinted with Muslim.sg's kind permission. It was first published on Muslim.sg's website and it has been edited by The Muslim Reader, for brevity.



وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِنْ
شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ

"And (remember) when your Lord proclaimed, 'If you are grateful, I will certainly give you more....'"
(Surah Ibrahim, 14:7)

[1] About the Author

Ustaz Fadhullullah Daud was a graduate of Al-Azhar University, majoring in Islamic Jurisprudence. He is currently the Head of Education Division at MCAS (Darul Arqam Singapore).

Significance of Love for the Prophet s.a.w

"Allah and His Angels send blessings on the Prophet: O ye that believe! Send ye blessings on him, and salute him with all respect."
(Al-Quran 33:56)

To know and to love the Prophet (pbuh) is an important obligation for all Muslims. Love can be expressed in various means. This session showed both converts and born Muslims how to commemorate the Prophet (pbuh).

Attendees were introduced to the Prophet's (pbuh) beauty through Qasidah (poetry) recitation, by Brother Aydarus from Revamp. He also explained the significance of the Qasida, remembering the Prophet PBUH, sharing stories on how Prophet (pbuh) used to appreciate poetry. The attendees were also gifted miswak and were taught on how to use it.



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Enjoining what is good and forbidding what is wrong is charity...

Removing boulders and thorns from the road is charity.

Pouring water from your vessel into your brother's is charity."

(Sunan At-Tirmidhi)



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SCAN TO DONATE



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WE ARE CLEAN

CERTIFIED

Alhamdulillah, the President, Exco and Council are pleased to announce that MCAS Singapore, has received the #SGClean certification.

At MCAS Singapore, we are committed to providing a clean and safe environment for all Members, Students, Volunteers, Visitors and Staff. We intend to play our part in keeping Singapore and everyone safe, by enforcing strict Safe Management Measures (SMM).

We also carry out regular cleaning and disinfecting procedures every day, in order to meet the stringent SGClean requirements. The common touchpoints in our Association Building, like the staircase railings, toilets, door knobs are also coated with NanoEL 365 Anti-microbial coating solution that is certified to work against micro-organisms, viruses and fungi.

We will endeavor to maintain a high standard in cleanliness, and we look forward to your co-operation to ensure that we have a clean and safe environment for all.

WORKING HARD TO KEEP YOU SAFE

